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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, who speaks with special authority as Chairman of the Conservative Party, plunged deeply for Protection in a speech to the "Imps" at the Crystal Palace last Saturday:—

"It cannot be too clearly understood," he said, "that it is not our intention to repeat that cumbrous, slow, and partial procedure which we adopted in the experimental stage."

He still talks of "safeguarding," but the distinction, which Mr. Baldwin has so often stressed, between safeguarding and a general tariff is now completely abandoned.

"The new Government of Canada," continued Mr. Chamberlain, "has brought in an emergency tariff, which is a tariff of a provisional character. Why should not we take a leaf out of the Canadians' book? It is all in the family. Why should not we, in the first few months of our office, bring in an emergency tariff? It may be, perhaps, somewhat of a rough and ready kind, but it will give our home manufacturers a breathing space while we enter into negotiations with oversea countries, Dominions, and foreign nations, and make the use which we have never yet made of the bargaining power which we have got in the best import markets in the world."

We do not know how this "rough and ready" kind of "breathing space" will appeal to manufacturers, but it seems to provide the greatest possible disturbance and uncertainty for trade, and might well stand condemned on that ground alone.

* * *

Mr. Chamberlain went on to say that it was a disaster that the coming Imperial Conference was not

under the guidance of the Conservative Party, which would enter into it "without prejudice or inhibitions." The remark might pass as a characteristic piece of Tory arrogance, but it reads oddly in a speech which bristles with prejudice and inhibitions. It appears, however, that if the Tories were in power they would propose "the quota system," which "is simplicity itself" and "provides that you lay down that every loaf baked in this country shall be composed of a certain proportion of home-grown wheat and a certain proportion, which can be gradually increased, of Empire wheat." Mr. Chamberlain must expound this policy in more detail. It may be simple to him, but to us it seems extremely complicated. To take one point alone, how is the quota to be enforced? Will there be a new body of expert inspectors examining our loaves and miraculously ascertaining the proportions of home-grown and Empire wheat which have been used in their composition?

* * *

"Less food and more taxes!" cried the mob in "Sylvie and Bruno," and the world in which we are living to-day seems hardly less fantastic than that of Lewis Carroll. The Soviet Government is chartering British ships in considerable numbers to carry wheat from the Black Sea. This must be welcome news to British shipowners, who have suffered severely from the curtailment of that trade, but it is causing alarm in the world's grain markets. There is much talk of a Soviet plot to demoralize the food markets, but it seems far more likely that there is a genuine desire to sell, in order to secure the right to buy the goods which Russia so urgently needs from other countries. The trouble is

that the world is economically out of joint and that trade processes which ought to be mutually advantageous have become menacing. It may be added that the suspicion which surrounds this very natural attempt to dispose of Russia's Black Sea grain surplus, is a striking illustration of the disadvantages of a State monopoly of foreign trade.

* * *

The work of the Assembly has now passed into the Committee stage; but, as indicated by Professor Webster, in an article which we publish in this issue, it has not thereby lost in interest and drama. The debate on the Minorities issue was illuminated by two outstanding speeches—on opposite sides—by Dr. Curtius and M. Briand, but was chiefly remarkable for the complete failure to find any common ground between the champions of the minorities and the Governments responsible for them. Notable features of the debate were the amazing assertion by Dr. Benes that the League had no right to alter its procedure in the investigation of minority questions without the consent of the Governments concerned, and the statement by Dr. Curtius that the German Government would gladly sign a Minority Treaty, and would like to see the system applied to all European States. It was, unfortunately, clear from the discussion that the British Delegation had been given no definite line on this question.

* * *

A discussion on Mandates gave Mr. Buxton the opportunity to state categorically that no scheme for closer union in East Africa would be put into operation without consulting the Mandates Commission, and to suggest that the British Government would gladly see the principles of the Mandate extended to all Colonial possessions. This suggestion was welcomed by M. Poncet, the French delegate, with the proviso that it must not be brought about by compulsion. The Third Committee has completed its work on the draft Treaty of Financial Assistance, which now embodies Mr. Henderson's proviso, that it shall come into force only when some effective step towards general limitation and reduction of armaments has been taken. In the First Committee, the refusal of Cuba to ratify the Protocol of 1929, for revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, led not only to sharp criticism, but to general discussion of the effect of requiring unanimity in matters of urgent importance.

* * *

The more formal business accomplished includes the election of the Irish Free State, Norway, and Guatemala to fill the vacant places on the Council, and the appointment of M. Briand as Chairman, and Sir Eric Drummond as Secretary of the Committee which is to investigate and report on the replies received to M. Briand's proposals for European Federation. It is noteworthy that the terms of reference carefully avoid the word "Federation," and speak instead of "close co-operation between the Governments of Europe in every sphere of international activity," and that the Committee are authorized, at their discretion, to seek the co-operation, in their investigations, of non-European Members of the League, and also of non-Member States. Finally, a word must be given to the Fourth Committee's discussion on the League Budget, as the vote of £12,000 for the Disarmament Conference led Mr. Dalton to quote Professor Madariaga's calculation that one year's average expenditure on armaments by the nations of the world, would finance the present work of the League for six centuries. That is a figure that should be made widely known.

In discussing the question of minorities in our issue of September 20th, we made strong comment on a confidential letter from a Polish Governor, which was published in the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN*. We are informed by the Polish Press Bureau that the authenticity of this letter has been officially denied, and that the Polish Chargé d'Affaires claims to have clear proof that it is a forgery. We await with interest the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN*'s reply. In the meantime, our paragraph of last week must, of course, be read in the light of the official disclaimer.

* * *

M. Tardieu's vigorous denunciation of Budgetary excesses during recent years has been followed up by an official statement of the Government's Budget proposals for 1931-32. According to this statement, expenditure has been reduced by nearly 300 million francs, and taxpayers need have no fear of increased taxation next year. The Budget, however, is only balanced by an extension of the sinking fund operations of the *Caisse Autonome d'Amortissement*, which relieves it of 1,800 million francs of national debt. On the other hand civil expenditure is increased by 1,000 million francs, and expenditure for national defence by 725 millions. The Opposition are, therefore, busy pointing out: first, that M. Tardieu has failed to keep his promise to reduce expenditure, and has merely tried to hoodwink the country by a piece of financial juggling, and, secondly, that the high figure for national defence shows the Government up in its true colours as reactionary and militarist. That is the line of attack for the time being. When the Chamber reopens, the Opposition is much more likely to use the time-honoured method of urging the Government to increase expenditure beyond the estimated receipts. They have, in fact, quite a strong case, for the Government's financial proposals certainly seem to have forgotten all about M. Tardieu's national equipment and fiscal reform schemes.

* * *

An interesting point in the ethics of international finance is raised in the Note which Britain has addressed to France on the subject of the claims of British holders of French Rentes. Four issues of French Government loans were made in this country between 1915 and 1918, and, since the franc was stabilized at one-fifth of its pre-War value, interest has been paid in paper francs, worth about twopence each. The British holders claim that they lent the principal in pounds at the rate of twenty-five francs to the £, and that they are entitled to interest at that rate. They point out that the French Government has successfully claimed to be repaid certain foreign loans at the old rate of exchange. This is their strongest point, and it certainly does not seem fair that France should have it both ways, though she nearly always manages to do so. The weakness of the British case is that these holders of French Rentes were consciously taking a bigger risk, in order to secure a higher rate of interest, at the time when they made their investment. It was open to them to buy British War Loan, but they preferred to take their chance with the French investor, with whom they will now, in all probability, have to suffer.

* * *

Sir William Morris and a number of other leaders in the industrial world have launched a new body, to be known as "The National Council of Industry and Commerce." It might be supposed that a body with such a promising title was designed to provide the staff work for British industry which, until the setting up of the Economic Advisory Council, it so sadly lacked. This, unfortunately, is not the case. It is true that the

Council will "endeavour to achieve in our own time some of the blessings which will flow from the concerted will of the Nations of a United British Commonwealth," but this magniloquent aim appears, from the general tone of Sir William Morris's letter, to be merely a cover for propaganda in favour of Protection and Imperial Preference. The National Council would do more for British trade if they would turn their attention from political pressure to measures of self-help such as Lord Kirkley's mission to South Africa, and Sir Ernest Thompson's mission to study the markets of the Far East. The amazing failure of British firms to be represented at the very successful San Sebastian Sea Fair suggests that there is plenty of room for missionary work along these lines.

* * *

The Kenya settlers, in their criticisms of the British Government's Memorandum on Native Policy, have found an enthusiastic supporter in Mr. P. G. W. Grobler, leader of the Transvaal Nationalist Party, and Minister for Public Lands in the present South African Government. Mr. Grobler, of course, believes in a policy based on white domination, and segregation of the natives. What is a little surprising is that he claims for South Africans the right to forbid the introduction of any other policy into any part of British Africa. He promises support to the settlers in their struggle against Downing Street, and warns Downing Street itself that South Africans "cannot passively acquiesce" in the enforcement in East Africa of principles which conflict with the segregation formula, and "will not allow the work of amateurs . . . in a matter of such vital importance to us all."

* * *

The Chinese kaleidoscope has received another turn. While Chiang Kai-shek, with the armies of the Nanking Government, and Feng Yu-hsiang at the head of his own redoubtable force, faced each other round the city of Kaifeng, Feng's ally, Yen Hsi-shan, the "Model Tuchun," had solemnly installed himself as the head of a provisional Government in Peking. At this moment Chiang Hsueh-liang, the Governor of Manchuria, made a dramatic appearance upon the scene with the dispatch of an identical telegram to Chiang, Feng, and Yen, calling upon them to drop the fratricidal strife, and enter into immediate negotiations for a peaceful settlement. What was more, he added that he would throw his own weight into the scale against any one of the three who was so misguided as to neglect his advice. This ultimatum was followed by an immediate advance of the Manchurian forces upon Peking. The "Model Tuchun" and his troops faded away before them with a peaceful celerity which suggested previous arrangement, and it now remains to be seen what attitude Feng and Chiang will adopt.

* * *

In the meantime, it is reported that the negotiations between Sir Miles Lampson and the Nanking Government on the question of extraterritorial rights have temporarily broken down, owing to the desire of the Chinese to proceed more rapidly with abolition than the British Government could admit. Sir Miles Lampson has sent for further instructions, and the Chinese Foreign Office is believed to be drafting new proposals. The moment seems appropriate for reminding Nanking that the progress made with the abolition of extraterritoriality must depend very largely upon the state of China itself, and that a settlement with Feng and Yen would give Nanking some chance of putting its house in order. The everlasting drain of military operations has hitherto stultified all efforts at financial and

administrative reform, and peace would be cheaply bought at the price of giving Feng and Yen, as well as the ruler of Manchuria, some measure of autonomy.

* * *

The project of the Cunard Company to build a vessel of 70,000 tons, with a speed of 30 knots, to carry 4,000 passengers and a crew of 800, must appeal to the imagination of anyone who is not in open revolt against size and speed. It was a wicked thing, therefore, to allege, without the smallest foundation, that the plan was being obstructed by Lloyd's, and we are glad to see it firmly established that the reverse is the truth. Lloyd's, of course, is anxious to assist to the utmost any sound enterprise in shipping, and a great part of the insurance of the new Cunarder will, no doubt, be covered in "the Room." At first sight, some surprise may be felt that there should be difficulty in covering even a vessel costing £5 millions in the great marine insurance market of London. The principle of insurance lies, however, in the spreading of risks, and when it comes to a single vessel of that value, together with its cargo, there are not enough underwriters to cover the whole if each takes a moderate line. Perhaps the project is on too grandiose a scale, but who shall say where the line should be drawn? The Cunarder in which Charles Dickens crossed the Atlantic was, if we remember rightly, under 2,000 tons, and he was greatly impressed by her size.

* * *

For nearly three years there has been on sale at all reputable booksellers a book by Mr. Michael Fielding (published by Noel Douglas), the title of which is "Parenthood." To this volume Mr. H. G. Wells wrote an introduction, and at the time of its publication it was reviewed with marked consideration by the medical and the lay Press. It deals in a scientific and thoughtful manner with the subject of birth control and contraception. Copies of the book have recently been seized by the police of Chichester, evidently with the intention of laying an information that it is indecent and unfit for general circulation. This action may be merely another instance of local ineptitude, but can scarcely be dismissed as the unsupported action of a qualmish constabulary. It savours too much of the notoriously stupid methods of police censorship to be allowed to pass without a demand for a full and authoritative explanation. Until this is forthcoming we may be content to register the bare fact of this new instance of arbitrary interference.

* * *

Since some reference was made in these columns to the finding of the remains of Andrée's expedition on White Island, much new light has been thrown on the extent and value of the work of salvage. What seemed at one time to afford little more than the barren satisfaction that the fate of a gallant explorer and his companions had been revealed, has, through the efforts of Dr. Stüttendorff, been turned into a scientific discovery of importance. Andrée's diary of 142 pages has proved to be perfectly legible, and its varied contents of scientific observations will demand and receive the close study of technical experts. The appetite of the general reader will be whetted by the information that it contains also much human comment, and bears testimony to the unvarying courage and good humour with which the ill-fated party fortified their days. Even Andrée's collection of specimens from the flotsam of the ice has been recovered and is expected to prove of great value in the study of ice drift from the Siberian coast over the Polar seas. The tragedy of the intrepid balloonist is lessened by the knowledge that his attempt has, after a long lapse of time, borne tangible results.

THE EMPIRE AT THE CROSS-ROADS

THE main task of the last Imperial Conference was to define the Empire. The British Commonwealth of Nations, like Topsy, had "grewed." It had not been constructed to any definite formula; it had developed almost unconsciously into something without precedent or parallel in the political life of the world, and, as a matter of practical convenience, it had become necessary to take stock of its position, and determine the relations between its component parts. That task has been accomplished, and the Conference which meets on October 1st is freer than any of its predecessors to get down to the still more vital question—Here is the Empire: what are we going to do with it?

That question will be discussed chiefly in terms of economics. It is true that there are political problems remaining to be solved. General Hertzog will certainly raise the rather academic issue of the "right of secession," which may just as well be admitted in theory, since everybody knows that it exists in practice. There are other less academic questions relating to the limits of Imperial and Dominion legislation, the judicial functions of the Privy Council, and the improvement of the machinery for Imperial consultation, which call urgently for attention, and must, sooner or later, receive it; but they are likely to be pushed aside for the moment by the general desire to find an Imperial cure for the industrial and financial depression from which the nations of the Empire, in common with the rest of the world, are at present suffering.

It is common ground to all parties that this cure must be sought, in part at least, along the lines of stimulating trade within the Empire, more especially trade between Great Britain and the Dominions. Empire Free Trade in the literal meaning of the term would go a long way towards the removal of our present discontents. But it is perfectly clear that Empire Free Trade in this sense is, at present, impossible. No Dominion is prepared to admit, free of duty, British goods that compete with the products of its own factories. Australian fiscal policy is based frankly on the conception of excluding imports, from any source, of all goods which can be manufactured, however inefficiently and at whatever cost, in Australia itself. The present plight of Australia hardly suggests that such a policy is so certain a cure for economic depression and unemployment as our own Protectionists believe. That, for the moment, is neither here nor there. It is the Australian policy, and other Dominions have adopted it in a slightly less exaggerated form. What they are prepared to do is to offer British manufacturers an additional preference in respect of those goods which, for the time being, they cannot themselves produce, in return for new preferences to the Dominions in this country. But no British preferences will go far to satisfy Dominion demands (or to secure concessions for British manufacturers) unless they are extended to their primary products, which involves the imposition by

Great Britain of a tax on foodstuffs and raw materials from foreign sources, with the almost certain result of raising the cost of living and the cost of production in this country. The bargain may seem attractive to particular British industries. For Great Britain as a whole, with her colossal food imports, her vast financial interests abroad, her world-wide shipping, and her dependence on world-wide and not merely on Dominion markets, it would be the maddest of gambles.

Politically, the idea of an Empire knit together by a series of tariff bargains is a complication rather than a solution of our difficulties. Few tariff bargains satisfy both sides; none are permanent. There would be endless claims for revision; endless occasions of friction. The lobbying, the conspiracies of vested interests inseparable from high protectionism—as illustrated in the history of the new American tariff—would be carried into future Imperial Conferences themselves and tend to obscure or embitter the discussion of those urgent political problems to which reference has already been made. The alternative policy of Import Boards, by identifying Governments still more closely with the clash of economic interests, would be still more disruptive in its tendencies. The foreign relations of Soviet Russia present no happy example of the results of identifying the importer with the State.

Fortunately, there are other, more practicable, and less objectionable ways of stimulating trade within the Empire, and it is one of the worst results of the Empire Crusaders' raging and tearing campaign, that it has tended to divert attention from them. "The adoption of common standards by the various constituents of the British Empire might in certain industries"—we quote from a frankly Protectionist article in the *Times*—"have more effect on the direction of trade than any kind of preferential tariff." There is no lack of fields for constructive co-operation between the nations of the British Commonwealth. The establishment of a permanent Imperial economic Secretariat, for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of commercial intelligence and joint consideration of economic problems, the co-ordination of credit and currency policy, co-operative industrial and agricultural research, improved methods of grading, marking, packing, and marketing, the improvement of communications, the organization of emigration, the unification of mercantile and maritime law and practice, the simplification of Customs formalities, the abolition of double taxation—all these (and the list might be indefinitely extended) are merely examples of measures for stimulating Empire trade more effectually than by "any kind of preferential tariff." Their importance is illustrated by the valuable work already quietly performed by such bodies as the Empire Marketing Board and the Imperial Shipping Committee, and is emphasized by the admirable report of the British Preparatory Committee jointly appointed by the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of British Industries, and the Chamber of Shipping. But since they make no such immediate appeal to sectional interests, and offer no such sensational party war-cries as Tariffs or Import Boards, they

are very unlikely to receive an adequate share of attention so long as the Empire Crusade occupies the foreground of the stage. Freed from the incubus of the tariff controversy, the Imperial Conference might settle down as practically to "brass tacks" as the less advertised Colonial Conferences.

These subjects, it will be noted, while peculiarly fitted for Imperial co-operation, fall within the range of activities to which we recently suggested that the League of Nations should direct the attention of the world as a whole. Here we come to the crux of the problem. The world is sick, economically as well as politically, and its sickness arises from the failure of the nations to co-ordinate either their foreign or their economic policies. There are those who tell us that, because progress has been slow in the joint search for prosperity and security, we must give up the idea of co-operation altogether; they would have us cure the evils arising from armaments by increasing our own armaments, and the evils arising from tariff walls and financial anarchy by the imposition of more tariffs. In either instance, this calling in of Satan to drive out Satan is a council of despair. The logical development of the new Crusaders' policy—and many of them frankly accept it—is a world divided into great self-contained economic groups—the British Empire, the United States, Soviet Russia, a European group or groups, an Asiatic group (into which India, our greatest individual market would, in the long run, inevitably be drawn), a South American group, probably dependent upon the United States—each restricting and hampering trade with the other groups by every conceivable obstacle, fighting them diplomatically for concessions and spheres of influence carrying the control of raw materials, discriminating against their shipping, and wrangling with them over tariff concessions. That is not the way to build up the economic prosperity of the world; it is the certain way to the destruction of any vital political co-operation, and ultimately to war.

The British Empire, in fact, will be a curse or a blessing to the world in proportion to our ability to work for the unification of the Empire along lines that will facilitate, and not obstruct, the ultimate inclusion of the Empire itself (without loss of identity) in a larger unity. It is not our business in Great Britain to make panic changes in our own fiscal policy or to quarrel with the Dominions for sticking to theirs. What we have to do is to work steadily, by persuasion and example, for the removal of trade barriers within the Empire, and meanwhile to enlist the interest of the Dominions in all that wide field of constructive co-operation in which work of vital importance can be accomplished without detriment either to their fiscal policy or our own. That is precisely the part which Mr. Graham has called upon us to play within the League of Nations, and while it is certain that sustained effort on these lines would give an incalculable stimulus to trade within the Empire, it is equally certain that the examples shown and the experience gained by the Empire would have, ultimately, an incalculable effect on the development of the community of nations.

THE DISCUSSIONS AT GENEVA

GENEVA, MONDAY.

THE last week has been one of great interest at Geneva, and it culminated to-day in one of the most remarkable debates ever held in a Commission of the League of Nations. It has, indeed, been generally remarked that while the opening speeches in the *Bâtement Electoral* were much tamer than usual, and terminated fittingly in an evening session which hardly half the Delegates attended, the Commissions have been full of life, and have tackled the difficult programme before them with great spirit and energy.

The speech of the German Foreign Minister in the Assembly, though correct to a degree, fell far below those of his predecessor in clarity and force. It was not an easy task to speak at the close of the German elections, and his declaration of Germany's unswerving adherence to the League was more courageous than was generally recognized. It is a pity that the evacuation of the Rhineland, the enduring result of the realistic policy of Stresemann, could not be mentioned and made, perhaps, the basis of a new programme of co-operation between Germany and France.

This omission was much commented on, and it was generally felt that the political situation had deprived Germany of all initiative in international affairs. But the Commissioners have shown the contrary. By raising in the Sixth Commission the delicate question of Minorities, Germany directed upon herself the major share of attention during the week. The result was very interesting. Never before in a Commission, perhaps, have the Foreign Ministers spoken so frankly or with such emotion. At the Council Table, when action is contemplated, only rarely is such emotion allowed to escape. But this was, after all, only a debate, a ventilation of feelings, an attempt to rouse public opinion. Both sides, of course, used courteous language, but the thrusts were shrewd and the replies came more quickly than in the Assembly itself.

By Monday morning, a couple of days of this kind of work had attracted a large number of spectators to the big class room, and M. Zaleski and others did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity. The Polish Foreign Minister's allusions to Germany's past record in this question and his repetition of the old offer that progress depended on the minority treaties being extended to all Powers, as well as an unguarded declaration from the Greek representative, that "assimilation" of the Minorities should be the final aim in Europe as in the United States, drew from Dr. Curtius an unexpectedly incisive reply. It was generally felt that he had had rather the better of the argument, but M. Briand secured the final word, and in a speech of great brilliance came to the rescue of his clients. It was so phrased, however, as to be without offence to Germany, and his vigorous defence of the League and his condemnation of the attitude of the Minorities Congress won approval from many who still believe that much remains to be done. Needless to say, M. Briand quoted Chamberlain and Stresemann, for he brings both the living and the dead statesman to his support on nearly every occasion—his apostrophe of the latter at the Press dinner brings tears to the eyes of even cynical journalists. Altogether M. Briand has recovered some of the ground which he lost in the first week, by this versatile display of his genius which, incidentally, virtually dictated the report which the Rapporteur, M. Motta, will make on the whole subject to the Assembly.

The other subject which has raised most heat is the question of the reorganization of the Secretariat, the main topic of the Fourth Commission, to which the unfortunate Committee of Thirteen has sent its Majority and Minority

Reports. Neither of these can be considered very satisfactory, but the former at least preserves the international character of the Secretariat, which Mr. Dalton defended in an excellent debating speech. The Italians are more active than the Germans in pressing the Minority Report, and have circulated a special letter of observations backing their demand for government by a Committee of Under-Secretaries appointed by the Great Powers. There are not a few who hope that the final result will be but little change in the present organization, except for minor reforms as to leave, pay, and permanence of tenure, which have been long overdue.

Meanwhile the First Commission spent many weary and unprofitable hours discussing what could be done in the face of Cuba's uncompromising refusal to ratify the changes in the Protocol of the Court. This serious action, which holds up the election of the fifteen new judges, is entirely due to personal motives, and may be compared to Brazil's veto with regard to the entry of Germany into the League in 1926. It was a tough preliminary to the debate on the Amendments to the Covenant, which raise a crowd of debatable points—so many indeed that it will probably be long ere they are all accepted and ratified. At present they are giving a rare feast to the international lawyers, and the debate will long be a source of great value to the student.

In the Third Commission, the Treaty of Financial Assistance has been amended and approved, Lord Cecil showing all his old skill in guiding it into safe waters, and even winning guarded approval from Dominion representatives. Young diplomats who wish to know how to handle a Commission should watch him at work. The Second Commission has been stirred by the appeals of the Eastern Agricultural States against Soviet dumping. There are many people at Geneva who quite seriously believe that the Russian Government's main preoccupation in marketing her agricultural produce is to depress prices still further instead of getting as much as she can of the industrial products of which she has such dire need. Perhaps this curious belief will play as great a part in uniting Europe economically as fear of Russia's political activities has contributed to the consolidation of the League. It is significant, moreover, that non-European States have already protested at the assumption that the League machinery should be sought to assist European production as distinct from that of the rest of the world.

This economic debate is ranging over a wide area. It has already shown the alarm felt by many States lest Britain should abandon her policy of Free Trade, and their intention of making concessions in Tariffs to prevent her from doing so. There is, indeed, great promise in these debates, which have been far more concrete than those in the full Assembly. India, whose Delegation continues to show the marked advance of recent years in knowledge and ability, had the honour of proposing that the League should undertake a comprehensive survey of the causes of the present economic distress, a task which may well be one of the most important that it has ever accomplished. Altogether the past week has removed some of the depression under which the Assembly laboured during the General Debate, and shown how much it can contribute to clarify the great problems of the day which can only be solved by international action. Even the new elections to the Council, which gave office to three States who can scarcely muster six millions of inhabitants between them, while the four hundred millions of China are left without representation, though regretted by nearly all responsible people at Geneva, showed at any rate that the Assembly cannot be "run" by the Great Powers who were all on China's side.

C. K. WEBSTER.

THE "DECANTING" OF SLUM DWELLERS

THE Minister of Health has just issued an explanatory memorandum on the various clauses of the 1930 Housing Act. He tells us that "for its successful operation it demands the full and hearty co-operation of all local agencies in the acquisition and spreading of knowledge as to bad conditions, and in forming a sound public opinion to assist the Government and Parliament in putting an end to them. In this work the Local Authorities must themselves take the leading part, and the Minister is confident that they will rise to the full measure of their responsibilities."

Those who are engaged in housing reform—whether as members of the Housing Committees of Local Authorities, or propaganda housing associations, or Public Utility Societies, or Housing Trusts—and who have to answer this challenge, are confronted by a difficult psychological problem, which is almost as intractable as the financial problem. The taxpayer or ratepayer who has got to pay for slum clearance, dehousing, and rebuilding is still sceptical of the use of helping the slum dweller: and while he may sympathize with the hardships and deplore the suffering, he is apt to say, "these people will turn anything into a slum, they put coals in the bath." And the fact has to be acknowledged that about a tenth of the tenants on post-war housing estates have been careless and destructive and often in arrears of rent; so that there has been a certain proportion of waste in the stupendous effort which the nation has already made since the War to house its people.

Until the "coals in the bath" argument has been defeated the "sound public opinion" for which the Minister asks will not become operative and full advantage of the new powers under the 1930 Act cannot be taken. The most effective way of meeting the difficulty is to prove that the really degraded type of slum dweller can be taught and is capable of learning.

If a district becomes a Clearance or Improvement Area under the Act, temporary accommodation will in many cases have to be found for the displaced population pending the provision of new houses. This surely ought to provide opportunities for educating slum dwellers in the care and management of property, and for giving them a probation period before being entrusted with the new houses.

Hitherto experiments on these lines in this country have been on a small scale. Bristol Corporation has built two blocks of forty-four flats on the site of an old prison, in which the inhabitants of a condemned area are living, awaiting the erection of new houses. A philanthropic housing association in Bath has erected flats for eight families of slum dwellers in the centre of the city, and some of the present tenants of Bath Corporation's Building Estate have graduated in these flats during their transition from slum to housing estate. Poplar Borough Council has divided some houses into flats as "decanting" places for about fifty families—but these are of a rather low type of slum dweller, and their probation has tended to become permanent residence; rather a small proportion has been passed on to the Borough's building estates. Some experiments of the kind have been carried on in a part of Glasgow too; there it is boasted that no slum dweller is too degraded to learn new ways, and, given the right accommodation, decent citizens can be made out of any material.

The Dutch have brought this "decanting" system to a fine art. Although what is possible in a country of a small, homogenous population, endowed with a few singu-

larly rich municipalities, and where distances between home and work are short, is not necessarily practicable or desirable here—still, as Motley has said “the Dutch are the most intelligent race under the sun,” there are lessons to be learnt. In Amsterdam they have designed two sets of buildings as temporary homes for the very poor, one built in street form, the other a pentagon of small cottages. Each establishment has a bath house, a laundry, a recreation room, and sheds for handcarts (the equivalent in Holland for the pram!). Use of the laundry once a week is compulsory. The whole place is under the control of a woman house-property manager trained on Octavia Hill lines. She is responsible for rules being kept, acts as an adviser to the families, endeavours to show the thriftless housewife how to budget, and collects the rents. On one building estate in Amsterdam in the past year, among the thirty families who were passed on from the “decanting houses” only one family had to be sent back as unsuitable for a new and up-to-date house.

In The Hague, the “decanting” station consists of a settlement of 106 cottages arranged in three classes. The first class cottages are on the outer fringe, and the tenants of these have comparative freedom, and come and go as they like. The more degenerate are put into the second and third class, which are inner circles of the settlement, and are subjected to very severe tutelage. The only entrance is through a gateway where lives an Argus-eyed porter. A tower with windows facing both ways stands in the centre of the settlement, and in this the woman house-property manager lives and watches! All comings and goings, therefore, have to pass two sets of eyes, hours have to be kept, and there are strict regulations as to baths and laundries. Surprisingly, the relations between tenants and the “directrice,” in spite of all the discipline, are good. Removal from third to second, second to first, and finally to a new house somewhere else, is according to merit in housekeeping and neighbourliness, and after a certain probation has been served. The second class houses have gardens, and if neighbours are found quarrelling over the garden wall they are put back to the third class. It is all a little like the various stages in Dante’s “Inferno,” and quite fantastic to British minds. Almost clinical standards of cleanliness are inculcated as the Octavia Hill ladies advance with admonitory forefinger to detect dust on shelves. And on their own admission it is all too expensive to be worth it from the taxpayer’s point of view. The Amsterdam method appears to be the more successful.

Rotterdam and Utrecht both have small but successful “decanting” schemes. The one at Rotterdam has two stages of graduation before the new house is reached.

Paternal government of this kind—or perhaps in connection with Octavia Hill it is more correct to say “auntly” government—is not compatible with the British temper; but it seems clear that to obtain the best results and to save money in the long run, some form of regulation and supervision is necessary, otherwise the “decanting house” becomes a permanent shelter. It seems clear also, from both the Dutch and British experience, that it is wise to have several links in the chain, so that the first tenants of a new three-bedroomed-bathroom-house with a garden shall not necessarily be those who have lived for years in one room in a basement, but there should be graduation through the stages between. Indeed, the Minister of Health’s explanatory memorandum itself adumbrates this idea. Finally, it seems clear that most effort should be expended on the younger generation of slum dweller—people in the twenties and early thirties—a smaller proportion among whom are likely to be unteachable.

BARBARA BLISS.

WHEN DOCTORS DIFFER

’Tis puzzling, we must all agree,
To simple folk like you and me,
To note how many patent pills
For all our economic ills
Are offered to us every day.

“Your troubles come,” some doctors say,
“From tariff walls that hamper Trade;
So prompt arrangements must be made
To put new tariffs into force.”
You see the argument, of course.

From far Australia comes a voice
That offers us a different choice.
It says: “The toilers groan and sweat
Beneath a monstrous load of debt;
The cue is plain—repudiate
All loans contracted by the State,
Then borrow at a cheaper rate.”

Others declare, “Our darkest hour
Is due to lack of spending-power.
If every working-man had clear
For life five hundred pounds a year,
In spending it for his enjoyment
He’d make an end of unemployment.
Depression’s cured,” say Labour sages,
“By earlier pensions, higher wages.”

When learned doctors disagree
To this extent; it seems to me
The case concerning which they brawl
Can’t be so simple after all.
Perhaps we’d better turn our backs
On all these single-nostrum quacks,
And strive to set aside our shrinking
From harder work—and harder thinking.

MACFLECKNOE.

BOOKS AT SEA—II

IT happened one day that the library issuing officer of a ship was calling at the headquarters of the Seafarers’ Education Service and remarked casually, “We had X. aboard on the trip home.” “Not Z. Y. X.?” asked the official, naming a novelist of considerable fame who has written a good deal about the sea. “It was? Well, thank goodness, you had one of his books aboard anyhow.” “Yes,” said the ship’s officer, “and he looked at the card index and found that no one had ever taken it to read. But he went on looking through the card index and said at last that he seemed to be in damned good company anyhow. That cheered him up.” The moral of this true story is that to put good books on a ship does not ensure that they will be read; but one comes across collective lists sent in from ships as well as individual requests, which suggest very strongly indeed that the books asked for would be read. Take the case of the crew of a tanker which asked for Shaw’s “Back to Methuselah,” Tawney’s “Sickness of an Acquisitive Society,” Keynes’s “Economic Consequences of the Peace,” “Adam Bede,” Laski’s “Communism,” Williams’s “Copartnership and Profit Sharing,” Something on Buddhism, a Standard book of Gas and Gases, a good book on Electricity, and Thomson and Geddes on “Evolution”—it is difficult not to believe that there must have been several men who knew pretty clearly what they wanted to read on the voyage. In the same way individual demands for Hammond’s “Town Labourer,” and for “A Book on the Black Death” suggest that the books will be read. In a lighter vein, not a bad list was that from a ship which included “The Autobiography of a

Super Tramp," the "Log of the Cutty Sark," "Jew Süß," "Sergeant Grischa," "A History of France," "Pickwick," "Bleak House," "Monte Cristo," "She," "Night and Morning," and Burnaby's "Ride to Khiva." It was a tanker which ordered, "Machiavelli," "Ingoldsby Legends," Darwin's "Evolution," "Italy in the Renaissance," "Science of To-day," "Hazlitt's Essays," Henry Gosling's "Up and Down Stream," and Lucas's "London"—not a bad list for that desert island.

The Seafarers' Education Service is entirely catholic in its outlook, but it is necessary to have a certain foundation, and so it is a rule that all ships' libraries shall include an Atlas, a Dictionary, a History of England, and a Shakespeare. Different companies add to this list. One makes "The Loss of the Trevesa" a standard book, and another asks for the Smaller Classical Dictionary for the interesting reason that its ships are named after the old heroes. One line asks for a "language" book useful for the ports to which it trades, and it is not unusual for members of ships' crews to ask for standard books from which they can learn something of foreign languages. I know personally an officer whose ambition it is to be able to speak "the language" in all the ports to which his ship trades. Sometimes the Service is privileged to supply libraries which, it is certain, will be read, as, for instance, that installed on "Discovery I.", Sir Douglas Mawson's scientific expedition to the Antarctic, for which some notable scientific and technical books were obtained.

None the less the question of the extent to which books are read must recur, and it cannot always be answered satisfactorily. I have told elsewhere the strange story of the ship's carpenter who alternated, through a long voyage, between Shakespeare and light fiction; perhaps Shakespeare in bulk is a little forbidding to the general. Yet it is possible to obtain some definite information by a study of the cards showing the withdrawal and return of books during a long voyage. For this purpose I have analyzed the returns made from a ship over a long voyage beginning in September, 1929, and ending in February, 1930. As it happens, this does not seem to have been a "reading ship" in any marked degree; probably it represents a fair average.

In every case of this kind it is necessary to take wide views. It might be said that, in this particular case, it is disappointing to find that only one member of the crew, an apprentice, took out Masfield's "Collected Poems," but he kept them for a week, and the chances are that he read a good deal. One lover of poetry the more, let us hope, and something gained accordingly. One can judge something from the period during which a book was retained. Three men on this voyage took out "Bleak House," and it might be said that the fact that one of them kept it only three days proved that he did not read it. But this is not certain, since the evidence of his cards suggests that he was a very rapid reader. Hardy's "Tess" was read for periods ranging from five days to a fortnight. The engineer who kept "You Never Can Tell" out thirteen days must, one cannot help hoping, have tasted the flavour of that admirable comedy. One is just a little doubtful about Keith Henderson's "Prehistoric Man" and Lodge's "Science and Human Progress," each of which was taken out only once and for three days only. Two rather depressing probabilities suggest themselves. Neither book was read very carefully, and neither was recommended to others. A great deal depends, aboard ship, on personal recommendation. On one ship on which I sailed the arbiter of taste was the boatswain, and as he had a fine nose for "a good juicy murder, mate," the proportion of books of that kind favoured in the fore'sle

that trip was perhaps unduly high. Fraser Harris's "Rhythms of Life" was better read; the apprentice who kept Ogden's "A.B.C. of Psychology" for a fortnight ought to have read it, but does not seem to have recommended it. One or two travel books were well read. Kipling's "Barrack Room Ballads" do not seem to have been in demand forward, and Belloc's "The Road" had a single reader who kept it only three days. Undoubtedly the most popular books were, as might be expected, the lighter novels; yet every reader of the more important books was a reader gained—and this is the really hopeful thing about the Service. There are advantages in a limited library; books which few young people ashore read have their chance. Sometimes, too, ships supply definite information. Here is a note from a tanker going East on a two-months' trip: "The most popular book has been the Atlas; historical novels are also popular, and also popular books of Travel and Adventure." No one who has studied this most interesting question of the tastes of the sailor can rise from his researches without a feeling of optimism and a feeling that, if the sailor deserves the constant labour bestowed on finding the books he wants, the Service deserves the interest which the sailor takes in good books. Like everyone else, the sailor likes light reading; like most people ashore he reads more novels than anything else, but there is something very clean and wholesome in his taste. And when he leaves novels for something more substantial there is frequent and cheering evidence that he reads thoroughly. There is no man in the world who sets a higher store than the sailor on Pure Knowledge; there is no man who respects genuine authority more deeply; it is worth while to try to write as well as possible for the sailor's reading. And there is one other cheering point. The boys—the men of to-morrow—are among the keenest readers aboard ship.

H. T. KEMBALL COOK.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MR. MURRY EDITS KEATS

SIR,—Before we go farther, let me refer those who feel any interest in "this correspondence" again to my original article, the points of which are not covered by, nor correctly raised in, Mr. Murry's letter. And now for his letter.

1. "I regard the text of the volumes published in Keats's lifetime as authoritative. . . . I am quite satisfied that Keats read and passed his proofs." Mr. Murry is right as far as Keats's first two volumes are concerned. But what of the third, in 1820? On what evidence is Mr. Murry satisfied? To what did he refer the other day when he replied in the TIMES to Lord Darling that there was such evidence extant? Several of us seek information. On the other hand, there is the well-known copy of the "Lamia" volume, in which Keats has cancelled the "Advertisement" with the comments, "This is a lie," and "I had no part in this. I was ill at the time." (Is Mr. Murry right, or is Keats right, about those proofs?)—In 1925, in a little book of gleanings about "Shelley and Keats," I printed part of a letter in the British Museum, from John Taylor to John Clare, dated April 27th, 1820: "I have got all Keats's MSS. in my hands now to make a Selection out of them for another volume, as I did of yours, and I should like to write an Introduction too, as Editor" . . . who, then, was the authority for the minutiae of the 1820 volume?

Mr. Murry says that I implied he "should have deleted the inverted commas at the end of the 'Ode to a Nightingale.'" I did not know that there were any. I spoke of the "Grecian Urn"; and, to prove on evidence which even Mr. Murry may find passable the existence of a problem there,

I will cite Buxton Forman. "In the manuscripts there are no turned commas." Forman says more, but that is enough for the moment.

2. There was a correspondent, named H. Stuart, in the TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT who detected the false reading in the "Epistle to Reynolds," and Sir Sidney Colvin's letter welcoming this was also printed in that journal. Professor Bradley, in a footnote, arrived at the same emendation. The point exists; my intended criticism was that, as Mr. Murry had examined the MS. of the "Epistle," he should have explicitly settled the point for us on the best possible authority.

3. It is unreasonable of Mr. Murry, when he publishes an edition of Keats, to expect his readers to seek the annotations to it in another work. But, what are his "major problems of the dating of Keats's poems"? In how many instances have they come down to us without a date—affixed, or derivable from the Letters? There has been great debate over "The Fall of Hyperion"; true. Mr. Murry fears that I do not know what the problem of it is. If it is something concerned with making Keats a pet lamb in a metabiological farce, I do not. But, as for the date of the piece, I repeat that Charles Brown left little room for error. Consult the ordinary Oxford edition of Keats, "Introduction," by Buxton Forman, pages xix.-xx. Brown is quoted as recording that at the end of 1819, in the evenings, his house-mate had a room to himself "and was deeply engaged in remodelling the fragment of 'Hyperion' into the form of a vision." Buxton Forman goes on to point out Lord Houghton's misstatement on this, compared with Brown's distinct and direct evidence. The rest is conjectural.

4. "My undertaking was simply to do again, in the light of our fresh information, what Sir Sidney Colvin did in the chronological arrangement of Keats's poems for the Florence Press nearly twenty years ago." Mr. Murry's title-page says, "edited and arranged in chronological order by John Middleton Murry." That is, he is not only a chronologist here; he is an editor; and surely that means he acknowledges responsibility for the state of the text. But that is not all. Mr. Murry's edition has been announced some time; and I must suppose that his publishers' announcement, failing a repudiation from him, indicated the claims of his editorship. These were (to quote from the Prospectus of the "King's Printers' Editions"): "A definitive edition of Keats is long overdue. . . . No fitter editor could be found than Mr. Middleton Murry for such an undertaking. . . . It is therefore no empty boast to claim that—unless some completely unexpected discoveries are made—the edition will rank as definitive. . . . This new collation reveals how woefully inaccurate are the majority of so-called 'standard' reprints of the poems. Words, punctuation, even whole lines have gone astray."

As for the new collation (announcement or no announcement), Mr. Murry in his preface mentions his having carried it out. But that (apart from one or two things, noticed in my review) is all the benefit that the reader derives from it. Mr. Murry, in his letter, readily annihilates one reading which I felt strongly probable from collotypes of Lord Crewe's MS. of the "Nightingale"; I still think it looks like "fain'd"; but what of the others, which anyone can test easily? He affects contempt for one who places Keats's MS. in comparison with the printed text of 1820; is this the best attitude in a collator? Is the MS. not "authoritative"?

5. Mr. Murry disclaims the queer date of "The End, February 21st, 1820, Rome," as not being part of his own MS. But did he not receive a set of proofs? It is no great matter; only, in an edition of such caparison, unfortunate.

6. It would be a long and tedious business. Mr. Murry only accepts one of my points. Quite so; but that is not to the purpose. So far as I am concerned, what I was called upon to do (or any reviewer would have been on the occasion) was to assess in public this edition of Keats; it is for others to decide whether my criticisms are sound. Mr. Murry, like myself, must abide their question.—Yours, &c.,

E. BLUNDEN.

INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS

SIR,—A perusal of the new book on "Sanctions" tempts me to criticize the distinguished critic who reviewed it in your last issue. He makes four points against the book. He says: (1) that the author argues as if international justice would reign immediately upon the establishment of an international police force; (2) that, national psychology being what it is, it is improbable that people can be persuaded forthwith to set up such a force; (3) that the book would have been twice as good if its 795 pages were reduced to four hundred; (4) that a book of two hundred pages would be adequate on such a subject as sanctions.

Students of international politics, especially those who feel that sanctions constitute the crux of the problem of world peace, will hardly agree with the assertion (4). So far as my reading extends I know only of two publications of the dimensions favoured by your reviewer dealing with the subject of enforced peace, and neither of them covers more than the fringe of the problem. There is no branch of international jurisprudence which more requires research work and investigation and inquiry, for the complexities arising from any scheme which seeks to set up a super-national authority are endless. One of the chief merits of the new book is that it is the first adequate work published which deals comprehensively with the whole problem.

As for assertion (1), the argument developed in "The Problem of the Twentieth Century" does not claim, as I follow it, that international justice will reign immediately upon the establishment of an international police force. The melancholy story of poor humanity's struggle after international justice throughout the ages which is so frankly told in the book could hardly support such a theme. What the author does contend is that the very terror of the revolutionary change which has taken place in the character and multiplicity of weapons since 1914 offers a way of escape for the nations from the thralldom of war. The book simply pleads with reformers in every country to concentrate their efforts in focusing public opinion on the vital significance of an international force.

The use of the word "forthwith" in (2) is hardly justified by the language of Chapter XII., in which the author discusses the psychological effect of an international police force in fostering the law-abiding habit of mind among the nations. As for (3), there is just the same degree of accuracy in it as there is in the statement that "Dreams and Realities" would be twice as concise if it were reduced to half its length.

I am reluctant to write this, as no reader of THE NATION enjoys Mr. Woolf's reviews more deeply than the present writer—they are invariably so fair and balanced. But on this occasion he has not been quite just.—Yours, &c.,

L. E. X.

A GROSS SCANDAL

SIR,—As Dr. C. J. Bond is rightly anxious that "the statements made at the Modern Churchmen's Conference should not be misunderstood," perhaps you will allow me to quote from the DAILY NEWS report (July 22nd) on which I based my previous letter (September 6th):—

"This committee, rightly wishing to discountenance the marriage of blind workers under their care, has passed a rule which provides that persons so marrying without the consent of the committee shall cease to receive benefit and employment by the committee unless one or both parties to the marriage can produce a medical certificate that such a marriage will be childless.

"Two blind young couples under the care of this committee have expressed in writing their willingness to undergo sterilization and so comply with the committee's rule." (Italics mine.)

From this all who are interested may judge for themselves whether I was right in saying that the committee "insisted" upon sterilization. It seems to me the merest quibbling or juggling with words for Dr. Bond even to attempt to deny it. The Committee's attitude would seem to have been quite plain: "Fall in with our views, or—get out and starve!"

Dr. Bond is able, in his letter, to point out that in one case "the female partner comes from a defective family." This, however, it is plain, was only a matter of chance—a fortunate chance from his point of view, no doubt, as it

enables him to put a rather better gloss upon the affair than would perhaps otherwise be possible. But it is perfectly plain, both from the DAILY NEWS report (read in its entirety) and from Dr. Bond's own letter (see the paragraph he numbers 2) that what was *fundamental* in the Committee's attitude was a determination not to allow any blind person in their charge to bring any children into the world; *merely* on the ground of the blind person's poverty (consequent upon affliction) and consequent inability to bring up the child without further assistance.—Yours, &c.,

A. R. C.

Worthing.

September 15th, 1930.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

SIR,—Mr. G. T. Garratt in a recent issue examines the Agricultural Marketing Bill and finds little that is likely to help British agriculture in its propositions. The farmers' organization, the N.F.U., has attacked the proposals in much the same strain, and there is grave danger that the farming community will not be given the opportunity of full explanation and consideration of the advantages as well as the drawbacks of the Bill. The Markets Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture has been studying the marketing of farm produce in England and Wales for a number of years, and as a result have instituted the National Mark scheme for several agricultural products. It is a fundamental principle in modern marketing that grading and standardization be introduced to enable British farm products better to compete with foreign products in our markets. Up to the present the products of our farms have been marketed in haphazard fashion. Farmers have acted individually and their produce has been dealt with by the wholesalers and various other middlemen in the trade who have given service for which they have been paid, and the farmer has received for his ill-arranged produce what is left of what the consumer pays. There has been little attempt on the part of farmers at co-ordination in marketing, and perhaps less endeavour made by the middlemen to pay according to quality for all products; to define quality; or set up definite standards to which produce from farms should conform. The present Marketing Bill appears to aim at strengthening the National Mark policy in marketing. The National Mark scheme for eggs and poultry is gradually taking hold. But accredited packers under the scheme have to face the competition of higglers and small collectors of eggs from farms, who do not grade the eggs, but who for a short space are willing to pay high prices, with no other object than to induce farmers to break away from the new scheme. That is an old story in co-operative movements amongst farmers, and unless some kind of all-in programme can be instituted for the Associations which this Bill proposes to set up for improved marketing, the minority outside the co-operative scheme, with the middlemen to help them, will be able to do serious harm and possibly smash any organization up.

Mr. Garratt's statement that "they have no power to force the foreign producer into the scheme," is quite irrelevant. The Bill does not aim primarily at protection of the home market for English produce or at guaranteed prices—that is another story. What the Bill sets out to do is to enable groups of farmers to so organize and control their products, both in quality and quantity, that home produce may be given the best chance possible in the home market. It will certainly not solve all farming problems—it will not give the farmer the so much longed for "something for nothing," but it is a wise Government step in helping the farmer to help himself.

The multiplicity of products from our farms is well known, and the complexity of the marketing problem is appreciated by the proposers of the Bill. It remains for producers who can form a group to act collectively for business purposes and to endeavour to market their product scientifically. Where the majority desire to do this, the advantages are not reaped if the minority stand outside the scheme, co-operating with those interests whose only object is to beat down unity amongst farmers. In essence the proposals contained in the Bill are an attempt at rationalization in agricultural marketing. Difficulties in number will have to be overcome, and the problems are of such diversity that

progress will be gradual, even if the Bill does become law. If the Bill fails to pass through Parliament, farmers will gradually improve marketing of produce along these lines. The change is inevitable. Why, therefore, refuse a useful enabling Act?—Yours, &c.,

J. LLEFELYS DAVIES.

59, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth.

SIR,—In your issue of the 13th instant there appears an article by Mr. G. T. Garratt on the above subject. Mr. Garratt's article ignores two important considerations, and accordingly his conclusions are faulty. The omitted considerations are:—

First, that throughout the article he refers to *English* producers. The Bill, which he describes as "Dr. Addison's new Bill," refers to Scotland as well, but one looks in vain for any reference in Mr. Garratt's article to Scotland. That omission indicates a parochial point of view, and detracts from the value of the opinions expressed.

Secondly, his reference to "the one agricultural 'sheltered industry,' the retailing of fresh milk" displays a lack of knowledge of the actual conditions. Those versed in the subject know that the sale of fresh milk is subject to the competition—unfair, it is suggested, inasmuch as the conditions of production are not as stringent as those imposed in the United Kingdom—of imported condensed tinned milk.

Mr. Garratt's article is not calculated to assist home agriculturists in their effort to keep things going, and his omission of any reference to Scottish conditions will certainly leave your readers North of the Border cold. His criticism is destructive, and he offers no alternative to the Bill introduced by the Government for the more orderly and reasonable marketing of agricultural produce in this country.—Yours, &c.,

A. W. HUNTER.

113, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

September 15th, 1930.

ITALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

SIR,—I am not sure whether your readers will think Signor Villari's answer, published in your issue of September 13th, to my letter published on September 6th, satisfactory. He again falls in his old error of misstating facts and omitting important details.

The story of the Italian law faculty in Innsbruck is well known to me, in fact, is one of my earliest recollections of this town, to which I came from Prague just a few months before. The professor (he was only one) who was howled down and had to fly was not a member of this faculty, but was from Rome, and invited by the Italian students to open a "libera università Italiana" in this town. German students and other young people, probably also some other German nationalists, thought this a political demonstration, and made a row in front of the hotel, where a hall was hired for the lecture. The professor, an old man and a well-known scholar, who was probably unaware that his lecture was meant as a political demonstration, left the city by an early morning train, and the police made a line on the square (which I saw myself since I happened to live opposite the main entrance), and the demonstrators were kept back. Similar cases probably also happened in other university towns. On the evening of the official opening of the law faculty the Italian students had a meeting in a restaurant of the town, with songs, and again some young people made a row in the street. This time the governor of the province sent for soldiers to clear the street, in spite of the protests of the Mayor, who thought the local police sufficient to deal with the demonstration and to protect the Italian students. A young German painter was stabbed that night by a soldier's bayonet, and it was this which led to the breaking of the windows of the faculty building the next morning and the general wish for the removal of the faculty from Innsbruck to an Italian town where academic work could be carried on without disturbance. We were used in Old Austria to such rows, and I, myself, was spit upon and stones were thrown after me, while in Prague, as a boy, simply because I spoke German with my school comrades.

Signor Villari further does not see what I mean by persecutions of German-speaking Italian citizens south of the Brenner. I and everybody in Austria never think of

complaining against legal steps taken by the Italian Government against people who want to change the present frontiers by force. But I hope he will understand that we have a right to criticize this point of the peace treaty just as the Italian Government and other people criticize others. What I mean by persecution is the closing of all German schools, the forbidding of private instruction in German, the bringing of Italian officials into the small villages where they cannot understand and speak with the native population, in short, all those measures which are an endless cause of minor trouble to the population. He cannot convince me, nor anybody else, I hope, that those measures are necessary to preserve the integrity of the present frontiers. The policy of other countries shows just the opposite. Unless Italy changes her policy in this respect, I am afraid that public opinion will continue to see her real aims as such as I hinted in the last paragraph of my previous letter.

I also know that present-day Austria is under legal obligations towards her minorities. But why has Italy not signed the minority clauses of the peace treaties? She was not forced to do it, I know, but she might have done so spontaneously, or at least have carried them out without being obliged to do so. It is again the same thing as with disarmament.

And does Signor Villari think the readers of *THE NATION* so naive as to make them believe that the new territories ceded to Italy under the peace treaties would have been given her unless she wanted them?—Yours, &c.,

KARL BRUNNER.

Rennweg 24, Innsbruck, Austria.
September 15th, 1930.

THE ECONOMIC RESULTS OF THE BLACK DEATH

SIR,—I am obliged to Mr. Usherwood for his interesting comments on my quotations from Thorold Rogers, and for his reference to the work of Miss Putnam, which I am sorry not to have seen. But if I have grasped their purport aright, they only appear to strengthen my contention that the law of demand and supply is stronger than any man-made laws or combinations, and that if our wage-earners had followed neo-Malthusian instead of Socialistic economics, they would have secured a great improvement of their conditions without the strikes and political and class agitation and unemployment from which we are all now suffering. I was most certainly free from the illusion that the villeins of the fourteenth century escaped governmental control, as I expressly mentioned that practically all governmental and legal power was then in the hands of the landowners, and that two Statutes of Labourers were passed to prevent their economic advance due to the scarcity of labour. Thorold Rogers himself refers (I am writing in the country without access to his book, and cannot therefore give quotations) to the legal and other attempts to enforce the Statutes of Labourers by meting out severe punishments to those labourers who refused to work for the statutory rates, but maintains that an examination of the manorial records shows that the landowners were forced to pay the higher wages in spite of all judgments to the contrary, although they frequently attempted to falsify their accounts in order to make it appear that they were conforming to the law. There is no doubt that judgments and settlements were made in restriction of wages, but this does not prove that they were effective, although "Wat Tyler's rebellion" was no doubt prompted by them as well as by the poll tax. There is equally no doubt that Government interference frequently does harm, but little evidence that it often does much good; and the same may be said with even greater force of Trade-Union restrictions.

I was careful to disclaim the most facile deduction from this example, that mere reduction of the number of wage-earners at the present time would greatly improve their economic conditions in the face of external competition. But it is surely obvious that if those who are at present unemployed and living on relief had not been born, their burden on taxation and industry would have been avoided, and the remainder of the community, including the employed workers, would have been better off. Further, it should be patent to all unprejudiced persons that unemployment is due

not only to there being too many applicants in the labour market, but to the fact that a considerable proportion of the unemployed are of inferior capacity, and likely to have children of inferior capacity. Do what we will, we cannot raise the standard of life of our people much above that of our competitors, unless our average productive power is higher. Our people have the advantage of good educational and other opportunities, and therefore ought to have high efficiency, but if they have not the capacity to profit by these advantages and become more efficient than our rivals, and yet insist on a standard of existence in excess of their productive capacity, they will simply drag our country down to ruin.

We have been told and believed that "Justice" demands that every person born into the community has a right to live and to a decent standard of existence, but there is another equally cogent standard of justice which claims that no person has a right to take more out of the community for himself and his family than his labour puts into it. The only way of reconciling these two claims is to see that we only breed the proper number and quality of human beings. Instead of protecting the weak we must cease to breed weaklings; instead of attempting to break up the capitalist industrial system we must promote efficiency and thrift so that all may become capitalists; instead of claiming a fictitious "equality," we must secure a nearer approach to a real high level of equality by breeding out the unsuccessful types. Now that our Ministry of Health has, at last, had the good sense to allow the teaching of birth-control at the public health centres to which our poorest and least fit resort, we may hope for progress in this direction; but it is equally vital that we should try to educate the masses to realize that the totally false economic doctrines they have been following are largely responsible for unemployment and industrial depression, and that the only sure path towards their own prosperity lies in rational reproduction, willing and efficient work, and thrift.—Yours, &c.,

C. V. DRYSDALE.

GOLD, THE ARBITER OF DESTINY

SIR,—I must thank Mr. O. W. Owen for his courteous letter, and shall endeavour to reply to the questions he asks. He asks "is there not a risk that the new gold will merely swell the stocks of the Federal Reserve Bank and the Bank of France?" Gold goes to America and France because it is more valuable than commodities. As a result of the fall in the prices of commodities it is possible that through various adjustments our exports of commodities to France will increase. That will tend to improve the French exchange, and therefore to check the export of gold bullion to that country.

It is true that a fall in prices does increase the charge of the National Debt, but this is offset by the above effect, also by cheap money and credit, which, in turn, leads to more favourable conversion of the debt, and to an increase in our foreign trade. As I have previously stated, I know of no restriction of credit to those who were in a position to desire it. I do not know of any lack of co-operation on the part of the Central Banks, but have no doubt the Bank for International Settlements will be willing to help in this co-operation.—Yours, &c.,

D. M. MASON.

September 22nd, 1930.

BROWNING AND LYRICS

SIR,—Why is your reviewer so astonished by Mr. Benson's citation of Browning's remarks on lyrics to the Archbishop? There is nothing in the least mysterious about Browning's words. Actually he was inclined to repeat himself on this subject. C. K. Paul said once to Browning: "What your admirers wish, of whom I claim to have been one of the earliest, is that you should give us some more lyrics." "Lyrics!" scoffed the poet, "I could give you buckets of them, but they're not worth the trouble."

I commend the saying to anyone who cares to make a collection (in the old-fashioned way) of the perversity of poets about their own work.—Yours, &c.,

H. KEMBALL COOK.

Cartmel, Crossways, Gidea Park, Romford.
September 12th, 1930.

THREE POEMS BY R. H. MOTTRAM

SUMMER DAWN

BIRD of the pearl-grey twilight, whose cadence, rising and falling,
Shakes and varies, melodious, as a rock-bedded mountain stream,
Mix me a draught of your song, your Calling, Answering,
Calling,
With the light of a dawn-pale moon, and the speed of a dream.

Wash me my harsh-grained throat, bathe me my 'wildered vision,
Lend me your white-lined wing, lighten my leaden heart,
Let me go forth on your darting, carolling mission :
The rousing of wingless, songless earth to play its part !

PEACEMAKERS

PUT up your swords ! The time is gone
When, careless what ye trod upon,
With rage unreasoning, childlike mad,
Ye smote each other, and were glad.
Of late, some smiters, growing tired
Of smiting more than they desired,
Have paused to ask each other why
Even unsmitten smiters die ?
Have watched the most victorious lost
Beneath Time's overwhelming host ; . . .
Have seen Existence, not the least
A never-ending Victor's Feast ; . . .
Have felt grow nearer every day
A third opponent in the fray,
That, caring not which ride or fall,
Impartially erases all.
Too many of ye now are born
With arms that tire, and hearts forlorn.
Now the old Smite-first, Pray-next breed
Is dying slowly. Smiters, heed !
Take thought while hasteless Time affords
A truce for thought. Put up your swords !

THE DESERTED CHURCH! TOWER ON SIDESTRAND CLIFF

ON ! once I had a clamorous bell
The villagers all knew so well
That through my porch they drifted in,
To learn the ways of shunning Sin.
For " Love wide as the Sea " their quest,
For " Peace " and " Everlasting Rest ! "
They sang and sat with one accord,
The preachers preached, the elders snored,
The children fidgeted and played
And each young man eyed each young maid,
Till when he came to " Glory be . . . "
All rose, and drifted out of me !

My bell is gone, my porch is down ;
Through my void windows now is blown
By every wind the day may send
The breath no preacher now will spend,
The young and old are here in rows,
Where, flowery tall, the sweet hay grows ;
They neither fidget now nor snore,
The young men eye young maids no more ;
They come not, go not, soon or late,
But with me, on the cliff-edge, wait.
Seaward we slip, and seem more fain
To be " washed clean " and " born again ! "

THE LOVE OF A CAT

SAMBO was sprawling on my shoulder purring like a machine-gun. He is not my cat, but just one of our visitors. She has a theory that he belonged to a man who died about a year ago not many doors away from us—that he is a man's cat, and that for that reason he attaches himself to me.

" He is really devoted to you," She said.

The weight of a cat on one's shoulder when one is trying to write, as I was, becomes irksome. I was unwilling to disturb Sambo in his contentment—moreover, I am superstitious, and he is pure black with not so much as a white hair—but my neck had begun to ache, and I replied in a cynical vein.

" Cats," I dogmatized, " attach themselves to places, not to persons. My shoulder is a convenient place : Sambo is purring because he is comfortable. Cats have no disinterested affections."

She, being just and jealous of her loves, rebuked me. " You have forgotten Woodner," She said. And, in truth, I was forced to admit that, strangely enough, I had for the moment forgotten that very gallant old cat.

I knew Woodner only in the evening of his days. He was about fifteen years old when he came to our cottage in Surrey, and as to his earlier life She is my witness. He was born in a hollow tree on a farm in County Dublin, part of the demesne of Her grandmother. His mother, who was wholly undomesticated and lived by hunting, was found terribly maimed by a trap and was mercifully shot. It was Her brother, then a boy of fifteen, who found the one surviving kitten and brought it to the stable, where, by the joint efforts of himself and Michael Donovan, groom, herd, and odd man, it was successfully reared. The stable was at that time the abiding place also of sundry terrier pups, and, at the instigation of Michael, the kitten was docked in the approved fashion to match them, and was thus condemned to wear, instead of the graceful, expressive tail which was his by right, a ridiculous stump. And, because the kitten's stump was not unlike a broken stick, it became the custom to address him as " Wooden Tail " and, by degrees, " Woodner," for short.

Woodner became a stable and cow-house cat, roaming the farm at will and bearing Michael Donovan company like the dog he had been made to ape. Every evening he made a show of helping to bring in the cows, and received as his reward a ration of milk. Warm from the cow he liked it, and no saucer would serve his turn. With wide open mouth he sat between Michael's legs, and straight from the cow to his mouth Michael directed a liberal allowance. It will be seen that Woodner was no ordinary cat.

Cats were not encouraged in Her grandmother's house, and for some years Woodner respected the taboo. The blood of his mother had implanted in him the instincts of the wild, and the domestic hearth held no lure for him. He liked the open fields, the hedgerows, and the dark lofts of the stables and the cow-houses, and in the untutored Michael he recognized something of his own wild spirit. He had no yearnings after a nearer approach to civilization.

Then She, still little more than a child, came on a long visit, and She discovered Woodner, and he found, as so many others have found, that She was irresistible. And so it came about that one day, to the astonishment of all and the disapproval of most—especially of Her grandmother—Woodner, boldly wary, walked into the house. He was driven out, but, having once crossed the threshold, he returned, as cats will, and gradually established a foothold. After unavailing protests, even Her awe-inspiring grand-

mother bowed to the inevitable, and thenceforward, whenever She was in residence at what She always regarded as Her true home in Ireland, Woodner slept nightly on Her bed calmly braving the jealousy of a rival cat—Her mother's Persian, who was privileged—and Her brother's rough-haired fox-terrier, Billy.

Then She married me and became an exile from Erin, and two years passed before, after the death of Her grandmother, She returned to visit Her mother who was managing and winding up the estate. It was not the return to which She had looked forward: duty rather than inclination drew her to the home over which hung not only the shadow of death, but that of alien possession—for it was recognized that the estate must be sold into the hands of strangers. But at least She would meet again the beloved animals, particularly Tommy, the pony, Billy, the dog, and Woodner. And how well I remember the letter in which She told me how Tommy had not recognized Her voice, so that She had had to walk up to him instead of his trotting down in answer to Her call; how Billy had gone mad and screamed with delight only when, after long and apparently dubious investigation, his nose had transmitted to some dormant cell of his brain the shock of recognition, but Woodner had, without pause, leapt to her embrace and slept beside her nightly just as if there had been no interval of separation.

The inevitable sale took place many months after her return to England, and, as the date approached, the fate of Woodner was her chief preoccupation. The old pony had died suddenly; Billy was her brother's dog and had a home to go to; but Woodner—there was no other home open to him unless he came to Her. I was doubtful; I pointed out that a cat that for fifteen years had roamed at will over a large farm remote from high roads could hardly be expected to settle down in a cottage and garden in a Surrey village through which ran a main road alive with reckless traffic. He was bound, I felt, to stray and to meet a violent death. But She insisted.

"He will stay with me," She said, "I cannot leave him to take his chance with strangers who care nothing for him."

Her faith was justified. Woodner arrived one fine summer day in a large box. He was very still: not a sound came from within the box. I had expected a cat dazed or half mad with terror. The complete silence stirred grave forebodings in my mind—what would She say if— But the box was opened, and there emerged from it, quite unruffled, the largest tabby cat I ever saw, with an odd little stump where his tail should have been. Surely cats have ways of knowing things—some telepathic powers such as are employed by aborigines in the jungle—for I am convinced that Woodner knew the purpose of his journey and that She would be awaiting him at the other end. He went straight to Her with neither haste nor hesitation, was gathered in Her arms and, with one hand on either side of Her neck, purred his contentment, snuggling closer and closer to Her.

After a while, at my suggestion, we invited him to visit the garden. He followed us sedately, first to the front garden. With cat-like thoroughness he explored it. He seemed to know about the end next to the road, though he had been carried by it in a closed box, and he left it alone. Elsewhere he studied every detail with eyes and whiskers, and he climbed each boundary fence, noted what was on the other side, then calmly returned to the ground. At length he rejoined us apparently satisfied.

Next we took him to the other side of the house, where there were a yard, outhouses, and a mixed kitchen, fruit, and flower garden of greater extent than is usual with a small cottage. Here his survey was of a more general character,

but again he carefully studied the surrounding country from the top of the boundary fence. So far as I know, he never again climbed any of our boundaries, nor ever passed them until, some two years later, we carried him to a waiting vehicle—the first stage of a fruitless journey to our old cat doctor, from which he never returned.

Having viewed the outer premises, Woodner inspected the house from top to bottom. He entered every room and, with chin and whiskers, tested corners and furniture. He remained long in Her bedroom, and left it apparently satisfied that it was worthy of Her. During the whole of his life with us he never spent a night elsewhere than on Her bed. He began each night lying on Her or beside Her with his fore paws on either side of Her neck. It was a nightly adoration which caused me some concern lest he should suffocate Her by mischance. But he was very gentle and, his ritual over, would retire to the foot of the bed or snuggle up against Her body for the rest of the night.

Most cats take kindly to me, but Woodner did his best to ignore me. I was a rival worshipper of his goddess. He was not actually hostile; I think he felt that I had my uses, but he regarded me very much as he did the dogs. He tolerated them, and never interfered with them except on Her behalf. He constituted himself Her body servant, never intrusive except at night, but always watchful. If She were in the house or garden Woodner was never far away. By day She was generally surrounded by a pack of adoring terriers—chiefly Irish, hot-headed and jealous. They would jostle one another to be nearest to Her and from time to time bloody fights resulted. She loved the dogs, but detested the fights, and Woodner, jealous of Her peace, simply would not allow them. I well remember how, on a warm summer Sunday, we were in the back garden, She reading in an arm-chair, I busy, at some distance, on gardening tasks. The terriers were hugging her chair; suddenly their ever-smouldering jealousy leapt into flame and they were at one another's throats. I hastened to separate the combatants, but, as I ran, a mighty ball of tabby fur rose into the air from beside a gooseberry bush, and, describing a perfect parabola, fell on the back of the nearest dog. Woodner had been dozing in a sunny spot near by and, hearing the noise, had acted on the instant. The effect of this sudden attack, the impact of a body nearly as large as the largest of the terriers and armed with a score of steely claws employed with dexterity and unsparing vigour, was electrical. The fight stopped as abruptly as it had begun, the terriers crept sheepishly away and Woodner returned calmly to his patch of sun beside the gooseberry bushes.

That was but one instance out of many of his interference with a dog fight. Were there a fight on the lawn, leaping through the drawing-room window or slithering down from Her room over the conservatory roof, he would come hurtling to the rescue: if there were a fight within doors and he was without, a dark shadow would appear momentarily across the light from an open window and Woodner would drop into the middle of the fray, so that soon the fights were ended almost before they were begun, for the shadow of the stern, uncompromising peace-maker was omnipresent. Could but the League of Nations have a Woodner always within hail, the world's peace would be secure.

It was by such means that Woodner most vividly marked his devotion to his Goddess—by these and by his nightly guard. But it was more comprehensively displayed by the confidence with which he took Her devotion to him for granted. True he had infinite tact and knew when to stand aside. He never attempted to compete with the dogs when it was, so to speak, their innings. He never inter-

ferred with them unless they quarrelled, neither did he make any advances to them: he just tolerated them—as he did me. And it was the same with the other cats—all except Monday, the orphaned child of Sunday. Him he adopted—why we could never guess. Monday was black, very plain, but a friendly little cat. Woodner would lie beside him, enfolding him in his arms and licking him thoroughly all over as a mother cat washes her kittens. Monday often grew impatient of these ablutions, but, if he struggled, the gigantic Woodner held him firmly down, and he learned in time to submit with a good grace to a toilet which, be it said, greatly improved his appearance.

Woodner was old, as cats' lives go, when he came to us: but, in the two years of his sojourn with us, he left his mark on the history of the household. His bold spirit and his vigour in action commanded the respect of every man, woman, dog, and cat in the house. But all his love he reserved for Her. Monday was, I think, more of a plaything than anything else. To Her he consecrated his whole life with us in a real, single-hearted devotion. Yes, it is a queer thing that I should have forgotten Woodner when I was laying down the law about the affections of cats. Looking back, I think I had formed the habit of regarding Woodner not as one of the cats—nor yet as a dog, for all his stump of a tail; but rather as the incarnation of a gallant, selfless love.

MORYS GASCOYEN.

PROKOFIEFF

PERFORMANCES of Prokofieff's major works are rare nowadays, so one is all the more grateful to the B.B.C. for the recent performance of his Third Piano Concerto, a work which is especially representative of his highly individual style.

As so often happens with an artist whose style has certain marked idiosyncrasies, critics and listeners are inclined to fasten on the more pronounced mannerisms in Prokofieff's work and to disregard the equally personal but less incisive qualities in his music. The general attitude of the critics towards Prokofieff is summed up in the programme note, written for this performance, which stressed the angular humours of his work, and suggested that he "despised anything like romanticism or emotional expression." Thus prepared for a bit of cynical horse-play, listeners must have been a little surprised by the charmingly sentimental phrase for clarinet which opened the work, and even more by the long and rather swooning section in the last movement, which is as frankly emotional as anything in Franck or Tchaikovsky.

The fact is that so very few works of Prokofieff are at all regularly played in London that the average listener has no conception of the general trend of his work. The delightful march, from "The Love of the Three Oranges," is certainly typical, but no more typical than his Five Songs without Words, for voice and piano, which have a deeply-felt lyricism that is all too rare in contemporary music. Prokofieff is actually one of the few modern composers who primarily are melodists. That is to say, the thematic outline is the main feature of the musical style and determines the harmonic rhythmic and orchestral treatment.

With many composers, and, in particular, Stravinsky, the thematic outline is merely a scaffolding, fulfilling the function of an armature in a piece of sculpture; a necessary piece of wood or iron round which the statue is put up, but without any æsthetic value. It is almost impossible to recall any actual theme that is essentially Stravinsky. We recall, instead, some fragment of Russian folk-song or some scrap of Bach which has been submitted to Stravinsky's highly individual harmonic and orchestral processes.

In spite of the brilliance of the orchestration and the pungency of his harmony, Prokofieff's works impress themselves on our memory by virtue of their thematic invention, sometimes grotesque, sometimes lyrical, but always personal and sincere. This quality is so uncommon in present-day music that many people have almost ceased to look for it, and have concentrated instead on the purely technical and sonorous aspects of music which in Prokofieff's case are certainly sufficiently diverting to cloak sometimes the more essential features of his style. Where Prokofieff's music rests on a less stable basis is in his treatment of classical form. Individual movements in his concertos, such as the Theme and Variations in the Third Concerto, are completely satisfying, but the works as a whole are rather loosely put together.

This lack of formal cohesion they share with a very large number of modern works, for it is a strange thing that whereas, in the direction of melodic, harmonic, and orchestral experiment modern composers may be said to have often over-reached themselves, in the direction of formal experiment they can hardly be said to have reached out at all. One often hears works in which the first subject is in three simultaneous rhythms and the second subject in three simultaneous keys, but in which these subjects are introduced and developed in the mechanically antithetical style of Tchaikovsky. Far too many composers seem to be satisfied with having produced music which is personal in mood and colour, but which has not created for itself its own individual form. They pour their emotional mixture into an accepted mould like so much blancmange.

That is why Sibelius is a figure of such importance in contemporary music. He is the one composer whose creation of form is on a level with his creation of material. In each one of his seven Symphonies we find an entirely different formal problem, and in each one it has been satisfactorily solved. It is just this formal unity which is wanting in Prokofieff's music, up to the present. Curiously enough, his most satisfactory piece of construction is to be found, not in his symphonic works, but in the ballet "L'Enfant Prodigue," a work in which the rather dry material was admirably knit together, particularly in the fine closing scene. It is true that many of Prokofieff's works have not been heard in this country, and that his Second Symphony, for example, might show an unexpected formal strength. Let us hope that the B.B.C. will find room, in one of their numerous Symphony Concerts, for this work, which is considered by many to be the most important production of a composer who is unduly neglected in this country.

CONSTANT LAMBERT.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Follow A Star," Winter Garden Theatre.

SOPHIE TUCKER is reported to have said that it has for years been her ambition to appear in a musical play. Now, "Follow A Star" appears round Sophie Tucker. She proves to be one of the very few stars who can appear in a show without ruining it simply because she never becomes a part of it. Whoever she may be meant to be, it is all eyewash for her to pretend to be anyone but Sophie Tucker, and so when the curtain is drawn across and she appears before it with her accompanist and a grand piano as if she were at the Coliseum or the Village Hall the show is not ruined, but finally made. She has a powerful voice; and a soft one to set it off. She has personality, and spontaneity, and sex-appeal. She is fat, and she is "gonna stay fat." But none of these qualities really accounts for her. She is neither vulgar nor

refined, but she is like any other respectable artist in that. She has to be seen to be believed, and inevitably she must be believed in when she has been seen. Jack Hulbert, Claude Hulbert, A. W. Baskcomb, and their supporters, including an excellent chorus, would keep any musical comedy going happily, even without as much humour as there is. A good deal more humour has somehow just been avoided. The "Roman number" misses fire, and Mr. Baskcomb, though he acts superbly as a fish out of water, as well as looking like one, is not always well served by his material. The music is pleasant, and there is at least one tuneful tune, which is only a little over-sung. Mr. Jack Hulbert works as hard as ever, and the joy of him is that he always seems to drift on to the stage and do things because nobody has anything better to do. Also, he gives you a superior feeling by saying things as though he had never said them before, and would on no account tell that one to anyone else ever again.

"Sexton Blake," at the Prince Edward.

This artless entertainment has already afforded sufficient opportunity to the critics to display themselves in their lighter and more facetious mood, and it would be unfair to attempt anything further in the same style. Really, however, we are become too sophisticated in the ways of crime and crime detection to be much more than indulgently amused at this pompous resurrection of a slow-witted Sherlock Holmes. The incredible length of time employed in tracking an obvious criminal may have been a virtue in the days when Sexton Blake was making a fortune from the pocket money of office boys—who like their pennyworth to render good value in bulk as well as thrills. Bulk used to be a virtue on the stage, but the modern playgoer is apt to become impatient and demand that the cackle shall be cut and the horses come to. There were no real horses at the Prince Edward Theatre, but there was a bloodhound who refused to bay, and a wheezy taxi-cab that took a perilous left turn into the wings, and a railway smash, and a splendid bomb explosion that took a corner out of Sexton Blake's consulting-room as neatly as if it had been disintegrating a jig-saw puzzle. There were revolvers that cracked and poisons that had the most agonizing effect. There was a villain who sometimes appeared as a smart young journalist, and sometimes as a hooded ghoul—but unfortunately, though he changed his costume, failed to change his voice, and there was Mr. Arthur Wontner, who bayed a great deal to make up for the recalcitrant bloodhound. One was tempted to wonder whether this production was not three months before its time, but doubted whether the modern schoolboy on holiday, so skilled as he is in the wiles of Edgar Wallace, would be much deceived. Curiously, it would seem more suited to the taste of ingenuous middle-age prepared to recapture the thrill of less intricate mysteries.

"Monsieur Brotonneau," Arts Theatre Club.

This play promises well in the first act, but the bare passages that are noticeable in it even towards the beginning increase in length, so that one is fidgeting too often in one's seat during the second and third acts to enjoy the richer passages. This is not on account of the acting, which was almost all swift, sure, and unmannered. And it can hardly be the fault of the adapter, Miss Ruth Chatterton. The business man (chief cashier at a bank) trying to fight within him the claims of his love for wife and mistress has the battle decided for him by his non-combatance, and he is too irritating to be pathetic. There are several themes, but none of them has pride of place, unless it is the vague history of the chief cashier's neutrality. The fact that he is forced to abandon his position of happy compromise, not by either of the women, but by the attitude of the public, is the best point of all; but it appears in the third act when it is too late to do much with it, and its only development is that he takes the wife back for no apparent reason when he prefers the mistress, and when nobody cares which he takes back as long as it is not both of them. The first act, where passages of delicious and outlandish logic alternate with others of wistful sentimentality, is French in the manner that an English audience

prides itself on appreciating. (The banker has arrived at the office on the stroke of 9 a.m. every morning for twenty-five years. This morning he arrives at 9.10 a.m. and explains that the unpardonable fault is due to his wife, who was unfaithful to him at 8.15 a.m.) The play as a whole fails because its chief character soon stops being interesting. He never misses a step because he never takes one. He never walks into holes, he just gets put into them, and an infinite capacity for getting put into holes without doing anything about it is not a pathetic enough quality to merit two and a half hours' description.

"Give a Dog . . .", Embassy Theatre.

Mr. Lennox Robinson seems in this play to be curiously out of touch with life, the more so as he has written one scene within it that has considerable beauty and wisdom. His architect of genius-going-to-rust has an other-worldliness which scarcely fits into the general scheme, the "Charles, his friend," young man combines an extreme jauntiness with the sudden and astonishing faculty of being shocked at a limerick—"I didn't know you were like that, old chap!"—the two chorus girls are at the same time the perfect ladies we know modern chorus girls to be, and the champagne-supper cuties they may or may not have been thirty years ago; and some of the characters are mere theatrical props—there is even a peppery major. But for twenty minutes in the second act the stage is electrified with vivid and affecting life, throwing the rest of the play so much into the background that it might for all we care end before the last act. In this scene a newcomer to the Embassy, Miss Joyce Bland, shows herself to be an actress of more sensibility, sense, and sheer ability than the rest of the cast put together. Indeed, my favourable impression of the company has been decidedly modified by this production. The men were particularly disappointing.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, September 27th.—

British Women's Symphony Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 8.
Moisewitsch, Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.

Sunday, September 28th.—

Mr. C. Delisle Burns, on "Contemporary Social Movements," South Place, 11.
Repertory Players, in "The Queen Bee," adapted by Mr. José Levy from the French of Andre Antoine, at the Savoy.

First Sunday production at the Everyman Theatre.
Triple Bill at the Arts Theatre.

Monday, September 29th.—

"Leave it to Psmith," by Ian Hay and P. G. Wodehouse, at the Shaftesbury.
"The Way to Treat a Woman," at the Whitehall.
Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, on "New Books," the Wireless, 7.

Tuesday, September 30th.—

"The Breadwinner," at the Vaudeville.
Professor A. M. Carr-Saunders, on "Standing-Room Only: A Study in Population," the Wireless, 7.25 p.m.
The Prime Minister, on "The Imperial Conference," the Wireless, 9.55.

Wednesday, October 1st.—

"Knave and the Queen," by Mr. Edwin Justus Mayer, at the Ambassador's.
"The Passing of the Essenes," by Mr. George Moore, at the Arts Theatre.
Reopening of the Grafton Theatre with One-Act Plays, by Richard Hughes, Ferenc Molnar, and Others.

Thursday, October 2nd.—

"It's a Boy," a farce adapted from the German by Mr. Austin Melford, at the Strand.
Mr. Harold Monro, reading Poems by Shelley, Poetry Bookshop, 6.
Inventions Show, Central Hall (October 2nd-12th).
Mrs. M. A. Hamilton, on "The Week in Geneva" (from Geneva), the Wireless, 9.55.

Friday, October 3rd.—

Revival of "The Outsider," by Miss Dorothy Brandon, at the Apollo.

OMICRON.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

"WILL YOU COME TO THE CAMP?"

THE Gypsies! Few terms are capable of suggesting such contrasting impressions to different minds. Dr. John Sampson, who has at length published his anthology of prose and poetry on the Gypsy race and the spirit of it—"The Wind on the Heath" (Chatto, 7s. 6d.)—even feels that "the Gypsies are in truth a touchstone to the personality of a man." There are those who take a Parish Law view of these wanderers, and whose thoughts run on the lines of "all Minstrels, Juglers, Persons pretending to be Gypsies, or wandering in the Habit or Form of Egyptians, or pretending to have Skill in Physiognomy, Palmistry, or like crafty Science, or pretending to tell Fortunes, or using any subtil Craft to deceive and impose on any of his Majesty's Subjects." Truth to tell, ordinary experience does not supply the strongest grounds for cancelling that notion. The people who go by the name of Gypsies for the most part seem at least capable of looking too long on a neglected clothes-line; and the fortunes that they tell are such ready-made nonsense as to overcome the mildly romantic effect of "my gentleman."

I remember some of these so-called Gypsies from acquaintance in the hop-gardens, where they came to work. The figure of one, called George Smith, especially recurs to memory—in a football jersey and check trousers. George was employed as bin-man (as it is called—the duties are to help several of the pickers, the measurer, and others); and his kindness and bursts of energy, persuaded me that here at least the current attitude to his tribe was wrong. The four weeks of hop-picking ended; the farmer and his assistants sat at the pay-table outside the kilns; and as I saw George advance I computed the substantial sum which his display of honest labour would now realize for him. To my astonishment, the farmer waved him away, and George, pawing his cap, but making no complaint, hobbled off without a shilling. Four weeks, it transpired, had been too long; there had been some trouble the previous night over the disappearance of a horse, I think; and my friend was not disposed to question the rough justice.

Of Gypsies so considered as vagrants and vagabonds, many authors have condescended to write. The best that Wordsworth appears to have been able to say for them, to the disgust of Hazlitt, was that on one occasion a party of them had been doing nothing. Not that he thought this a very valuable feat. He himself had not been idle:—

"Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone, while I
Have been a traveller under open sky,
Much witnessing of change and cheer,
Yet as I left I find them here!"

(Dr. Sampson thinks the Bard may have been mistaken; and that the "wild outcasts of society" had been "not inactive during the whole interval.") In her earlier days, Queen Victoria selected her camp; "such a nice set of Gypsies, so quiet, so affectionate to one another, so discreet, not at all forward or importunate, and so grateful; so unlike the gossiping, fortune-telling race-gypsies." Regretting that there was such a popular fallacy abroad as painted all Gypsies black, she wished to do something for the "spiritual and mental benefit" of this little group. And one day the camp was empty; and to her feeling the "chief ornament of the Portsmouth Road" had gone.

Clare, the poet of the village, frequently talked with and wrote of the Gypsies; attempted to eat a little roast hedgehog with them, and noted down from Wisdom Smith and others the tunes they fiddled. It was not for him to regard the Gypsy race with the eye of human history, or to perceive in them the Oriental mysteries; but he had a strong liking not so much for the individuals as for the idea which their life nourished. "They dally with the winds and laugh at hell." They were to him part of "old England," an army of real liberty, with a song every day. But from Clare's conception of the Gypsies to that of Clare's editor Mr. Arthur Symonds—one may take George Borrow for granted in all this matter—seems a distance.

Mr. Symonds typifies those who look across the world for their Gypsies, and see them as in a vision, excluding most others: "They are changeless; the world has no power over them. They live by rote and by faith and by tradition, which is part of their blood. They go about in our midst, untouched by us, but reading our secrets, know more about us than we do about ourselves, prophets, diviners, soothsayers. They are our only link with the East, with mystery, with magic. . . . They are the symbols of our aspirations, and we do not know it. They stand for the will for freedom, for friendship with nature, for the open air, for change and sight of many lands. [The Gypsy] does what we dream. He is the last romance left in the world." I must impiously add that Hollywood has not overlooked the item Gypsy—you may see and hear the most desperate proofs of it.

It was discerned by Sir Charles Strachey, and is commented on by Dr. Sampson among the notes to his anthology, that Shakespeare's word "Ducdame" in "As You Like It," which for centuries has perplexed the interpreters, is a Gypsy word. "What's that 'ducdame'?" remarks Amiens to Jacques, and Jacques might have replied, "The word is in short a corruption or mishearing of the Romani *dukra me*, which became *dukda me* by the not infrequent change of *r* to *d*, these letters being closely connected in pronunciation in Romani. The expression, which means 'I foretell, I tell fortunes or prophesy,' fits the context perfectly. As the call of the Gypsy fortune-teller at fairs or public gatherings, it is a 'Greek (= sharper's) invocation to call fools into a circle.'"

Dr. Sampson's book, it need hardly be said, is drawn from the immense Gypsy literature which perhaps no one has under observation so fully as he. Besides that, it is arranged with a sensitive remembrance of the lay reader's requirements, the reader being desired to proceed consecutively through the whole. Numerous pieces selected are of a broad, "Open Road" character; and that being so, I may regret one exclusion. How many people, however, know John Gray's "The Long Road" (published by Messrs. Blackwell in 1926)? Yet, to me, it is one of the chief long poems that have appeared in my time, original in tune, phrase, and sympathy; in concentration of meanings. Years ago, the author was acclaimed, and justly, for "Silverpoints"; "The Long Road" is of another rank. I wish Dr. Sampson had found room for some of its rich realities.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

REVIEWS

MODERN WITCHCRAFT

The Story of Psychic Science (Psychical Research). By HERWARD CARRINGTON. (Rider. 24s.)

Rudi Schneider: A Scientific Examination of his Mediumship. By HARRY PRICE. (Methuen. 10s. 6d.)

Some Modern Mediums. By THEODORE BESTERMAN. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

To the cynical observer of the human animal, and of the feeble and fitful flicker of reason which we call the human mind, these three books may be recommended as an entertainment. Mr. Carrington has written the largest and most catholic of the three books, for he claims to "summarize the finding of modern Psychical Research," and he records an immense number of "facts" with regard to "supernormal" powers of mediums and other people. To anyone accustomed occasionally to use his reason, and even to weigh evidence, the state of Mr. Carrington's own mind seems "supernormal," or—since it seems to be normal for the human mind still to believe anything about anything on any evidence—should we say that Mr. Carrington's mind is distressingly normal? Like everyone else now living, he believes himself to be completely rational, objective, scientific. Yet his mind works in precisely the same way in which the human mind worked when it produced belief in witchcraft, and it is not very surprising, therefore, to find that there is not much difference between the facts which emerged from ancient and those which emerge in Mr. Carrington's book from modern witchcraft. (It is only right and proper that in this scientific age we should rechristen witchcraft "psychic science.") The state of Mr. Carrington's mind, which is really much more interesting than the "facts" given in his book, is mercifully disclosed by him in the first paragraph of his preface. "I have no particular theory to defend," he says, "and no belief to uphold." How well one knows that state of mind in oneself, the state of mind which is always ours when, in fact, we are least reasonable! And then, with delightful naïveté, he goes on: "I am not a convinced spiritualist; at the same time, I am willing to grant that the evidence for survival is remarkably strong. As to the facts themselves, I consider these undoubted. They exist: they are genuine: they are supernormal." To anyone who has not reached Mr. Carrington's supernormal condition, who knows that he has any number of theories to defend and beliefs to uphold, but who yet wishes to try to use his reason and weigh the evidence for "facts" as scientifically as possible, this exordium is rather bewildering. What are these "facts" and what exactly does Mr. Carrington mean by supernormal?

When one turns to the body of Mr. Carrington's book, one's bewilderment increases. If a biologist or physicist seriously recorded phenomena as "facts" on the evidence and authority which Mr. Carrington gives for many of his "facts," we should all think that he was either laughing at us or harmlessly lunatic. For instance, he records the "fact" that two Bordeaux doctors, "after months of patient work," have discovered that an anonymous lady resident in Bordeaux has "supernormal powers." Dead flowers or animals in her house do not decompose, for an emanation or fluid passes out of her body into the dead organism and prevents decomposition. She was able to make the blood of a rabbit which had already coagulated liquefy again on the third day and remain liquefied for twenty-one days! "These results," says Mr. Carrington, "are noteworthy. The little touch as to the liquefaction of the blood is particularly interesting—since it serves to throw a curious sidelight on one of the most spectacular and well-preserved of the Catholic miracles, viz., the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius." Those who want to read about a large number of similar undoubted, genuine, and supernormal facts and also about the better-known exploits of famous professional mediums will find them treated in the same scientific spirit in Mr. Carrington's volume.

Mr. Price's and Mr. Besterman's books are concerned specifically with well-known mediums. Mr. Price gives an account of the sêances held in London with Rudi Schneider, which recently got so much publicity in the Press. It is

significant that no medium has ever done anything of any intrinsic interest or importance with their alleged supernormal powers, so that the only question of any real interest about them is whether or not they are fraudulent. Schneider is just the same as all the rest of them. He can make a curtain blow about, a hand-bell ring, a table or a waste-paper basket move. When such things happen, Mr. Price says that "the effects witnessed were brilliant." If such are the effects of supernormal powers, then obviously supernormal powers are merely silly and childish. A fortiori, if, as alleged, they are really produced by the spirits of the dead, it only proves that the state of our minds in the next world will be even more lamentable than it is in this. If Julius Cæsar and George Eliot have reached the stage of imbecility which they show when they communicate through mediums, the less communication we have with the other world until we unfortunately arrive there the better, for its intellectual standard is that of a home for mentally defective children.

Mr. Besterman's book is really interesting. He gives an account of five mediums, Mrs. Piper, Frau Maria Silbert, Eva C., Mme. Kahl-Toukholka, and Margery alias Mrs. Crandon. Mr. Besterman deals with the facts with great impartiality and a real desire to arrive at the truth. Nearly all the famous mediums have sooner or later been convicted of producing their effects fraudulently, and it is not, therefore, surprising to find that of the five treated by him in this book only Mrs. Piper remains above suspicion. Mr. Besterman argues that her most remarkable achievements furnish no proof of survival after death, but do furnish proof of telepathy.

LEONARD WOOLF.

NEW NOVELS

The Back-to-Backs. By J. C. GRANT. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d.)

Apples Be Ripe. By LLEWELLYN POWYS. (Longmans. 7s. 6d.)

Staying With Relations. By ROSE MACAULAY. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

Seventeen. By ALARIC JACOB. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

Parties. By CARL VAN VECHTEN. (Knopf. 7s. 6d.)

The Pig is Fat. By LAWRENCE M. MAYNARD. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)

The Little Town. By HEINRICH MANN. Translated by WINIFRED

RAY. (Secker. 7s. 6d.)

Claudia. By ARNOLD ZWEIG. Translated by ERIC SUTTON.

(Secker. 7s. 6d.)

Quite Contrary. By PAUL BLOOMFIELD. (Lane. 6s.)

One question I always ask myself after reading a novel, "What made the author write this?" I do not mean, was it written for fame or for money, as self-expression or as a pure work of art, but what was the particular idea which set his imagination to work in this particular direction. In the case of most great novels, the answer is easily found. Richardson wrote "Clarissa" as a warning to harsh parents and innocent girls. Choderlos de Laclos wrote "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" to expose the corruption of the French aristocracy. But however didactic their aims, these two great artists were, as artists, originally impelled by their interest in the idea of a seduction. The elaborate architecture of their books, the sitting-rooms crowded with furniture and carefully characterized relations, the passages with servants peeping at the keyholes, the gardens with a view upon the woods and circumscribing streams, all these are but the auxiliaries or consequences of a plan which begins with one central room, a girl's bedroom into which a man attempts to penetrate. In the case of Balzac the answer is sometimes rather less simple. Each of his novels is only one instalment of a prodigious undertaking originating in his thrilled vision of contemporary society, a society unequalled in its complication, its passion, and its ruthlessness, and one in which everyone was either shark or victim, clever knave or virtuous fool. Even so the seminal idea of "Eugénie Grandet" or "Le Lys dans la Vallée" or "César Birotteau" or "Le Père Goriot" is clear enough, and "Les Illusions Perdues" reveals its inspiration in its title. It is similarly possible, I think, to perceive the particular directing idea behind each one of the novels of Jane Austen, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Henry James.

With contemporary fiction the question becomes more difficult. The best novels depend less and less upon mere

situation, more and more upon indefinable and changing patterns of human relationship. What precisely was the vision which set Mrs. Woolf writing "To the Lighthouse"? Has any critic, has Gide himself, distinguished one original governing idea in "Les Faux Monnayeurs"? In such cases the author's subtlety or width of instantaneous vision makes the answer difficult. But with a mass of ordinary modern fiction the answer is not hidden. It is non-existent. The author has never said, "There it is. I must catch that!" And habit, not an instant of vision, is the only impelling force.

Of the nine books named at the head of this review, seven are reasonably readable, and are the result of a clear intention. Mr. J. C. Grant has lived in a mining village till his anger, pity, and disgust exploded in "The Back-to-Backs." Mr. Liam O'Flaherty has written an angry preface to it. And what decent human being is not permanently angry at the hideousness and misery in our industrial civilization? But when he diverts his anger upon the critics, he is unfair. One may consider criticism a futile occupation compared with politics or philanthropy, but it is a critic's business to insist upon certain standards and not to confuse æsthetic with political or philanthropic issues. A book about miners or boiler-makers is not necessarily better than a book about sculptors or dukes. As a matter of fact "The Back-to-Backs" does seem to me the best of this week's novels. The author, like Zola, has imaginatively invested a sordid subject with infernal horror. If most miners saw their life in the way Mr. Grant sees it, there would be revolution or mass-suicide. The fact that they do not see it in this way may indeed be thought to aggravate the disgrace. In any case Mr. Grant's novel may be recommended to persons interested in literature as well as to those who "do not understand why those tiresome miners strike." It has not the epic sweep of "Germinal," but it is the nearest English equivalent. The style is often amateur and always rhetorical, but there are sudden images of great beauty.

Mr. Llewellyn Powys is also in revolt against our present civilization, but it is the ignorance, vulgarity, and emptiness of middle-class life which drive him to the inkpot. "I'll take the sort of man I like, and put him in the society I hate and then make him escape into the society I like." On this basis Mr. Powys begets a passionate young man who wants entire liberty of mind and body, and makes him a preparatory schoolmaster at Eastbourne, marries him to a cold and genteel virgin, and then releases him into the free life of a tramp and an agricultural labourer. The hero behaves with a tactlessness which amounts to gross stupidity, and one does not see why with his opinions and character he should choose the most conventional of all professions. The descriptions of bourgeois society are amusing, but when the hero escapes, it is into an ideal world of Mr. Powys's imagination, an idyllic countryside in which girls are beautiful and amorous, parents are tolerant and humorous, and bastards are as welcome as beer. Mr. Powys writes well, and his novel is enjoyable, but he seems to realize that his countryside is a dream, for at the end he wakes his hero, that is to say, he kills him.

"Seventeen" is a novel of school-life, "by a seventeen-year-old about seventeen-year-olds." Only an exceptional boy of that age is articulate and persevering enough to write a novel, and Mr. Jacob was no doubt impelled by his desire to show what a public school is really like. But his book tells us very little. It is neither romantic nor whole-heartedly realistic. School life is usually dull when it is not agonizing, and the author has made a dull picture of it, because he does not seem conscious even of its dullness. The book from Mr. Jacob's point of view was well worth writing, but I do not think it is worth reading.

Miss Rose Macaulay is the President of the S.S.S.G. (Society for the Suppression of Stupid Generalizations). "Novelists talk about types of character. There are no types, there are only individuals. I'll deposit a novelist in a family she does not know, she will at once pigeonhole each member of it as a type, and events will prove her wrong in every instance." Starting, I presume, from such an idea, Miss Macaulay takes for her scene Guatemala and Mexico, and for purposes of excitement takes as it were from the

Stores catalogue of objects useful to the novelist, a treasure-hunt, a kidnapping, and a crook-chase. Her "pen-pictures" of Central America are, I am sure, accurate, but I would sacrifice pages of lianas and peccaries and salvias for one more joke like her description of the S.S. "Eugenia." Miss Macaulay is one of the easiest novelists to read, but she has chosen to be generous with local colour and excitement but parsimonious with her great resources of wit. The result, a cake which is not exactly stodgy, but disappointingly short of currants.

Mr. Van Vechten has taken a long look at New York under prohibition. "That's it," he has said, "I'll write a book in which none of the characters are ever sober." The result is amusing rather as the Medical Dictionary is amusing, or the works of Moll and Krafft Ebbing. In most novels the events affect you because of your personal interest in the characters. Here you can be interested in the events only for their own sweet sake. The characters are anonymous with alcohol, except a German Countess and a little boy who asks his parents to drink less till he is old enough to drink with them. As it is he never sees them: "they hate to have him see them drunk, and they most always are." The advantage of Prohibition, of course, is that spirits are not taxed and can be obtained at all hours. When I returned from America I found the restrictions in England most irritating. I am not certain that the English would organize against a similar encroachment on their liberty with the magnificent thoroughness of the Americans, but if the regulations in England become more rigorous, liberty-lovers will be tempted to support Mr. Scrymgeour and Lady Astor. Mr. Van Vechten's book is exceedingly clever, but none of my American friends have succeeded in explaining to me why they must drink so much merely because alcohol is both easily obtainable and forbidden.

The most enthusiastic supporters of Prohibition are the bootleggers, racketeers, and gangsters. "The Pig is Fat" is a picture of these people's pretty ways written from personal experience. The sentimental parts are overpowering, all the more so because of the use of Mr. Joyce's unpunctuated "interior monologue." But I recommend the book to everyone interested in either America or teetotalism.

"The Little Town" is not quite good enough to be very good. Herr Heinrich Mann had the idea of throwing an operatic company into the calm surface of a small Italian town, and describing the resultant ripples. The novel is slightly stylized like a ballet, but it just fails to grip, though the translation appears excellent.

"Claudia" is a sentimental, pretentious, boring book by the author of "Sergeant Grischa." What impelled the author to write it I cannot imagine, but I should suppose that it appeared in instalments in one of the more popular American magazines. It is a pity that Mr. Eric Sutton should waste his talent as a translator upon such unrewarding material.

"Quite Contrary" is in the manner of Thomas Love Peacock, an agreeable story, but so slight that one is hardly aware of its existence.

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

AIDS TO INDIAN REFLECTION

The Reconstruction of India. By EDWARD J. THOMPSON. (Faber & Faber. 10s. 6d.)

Renascent India. By K. S. VENKATARAMANI. (Simpkin Marshall. 3s.)

DR. THOMPSON has recently performed a very valuable service by a series of articles in the TIMES on "America and India." He has now added to the debt, due to him from everyone who wants sane thinking on the Indian question, by the publication of a book which is admirable in temper, and full of sound knowledge and even sounder common-sense. It is unfortunately true of so many Europeans who go out to India that after a few years they become "ignorant East and West." Dr. Thompson's subtle and sympathetic mind enabled him to understand the outlook of those educated Indians whose sons he was teaching, while his experience with Indian troops gave him an insight into the life of the unlettered peasant. The result is a book for

which many people have been waiting, written by a man who is essentially knowledgeable "East and West."

The book contains an admirable account of the nationalist movement, giving its proper place and importance in Indian life, but severely critical of its leaders when they embark on actions without thinking of their outcome, or are guilty of sloppy thinking and unreasonableness. He shows how the Congress, though never trusted by the British official, "pressed year after year for things that have nearly all now been conceded—for simultaneous examinations in India and England for the Indian Civil Service, for the right to carry arms, for the granting of Imperial military commissions to Indians, for the appointment of Indians on Executive Council, for elected and non-official majorities on the Councils." At the same time he can say of the Government's treatment of the movement that "when every act of Government repression and of individual police roughness or bullying is amassed for indictment purposes, it remains incontrovertible that no revolutionary movement—anywhere in the world's history—was ever handled with greater patience." Similarly, when discussing the much-abused Nehru Report, a document of more importance than is appreciated in England, Dr. Thompson writes that "the British Imperialist finds it doctrinaire and flawed by lack of practical experience. This criticism does not seem to me of importance. It was bound to suffer in the ways indicated, and we must take ourselves to blame, having kept people out of positions where they would be trained in administration, if their notions of administration are those of the schoolmaster rather than of the ruler. What does seem to matter is that the Report is fissured with disagreement." These quotations are given in an attempt to suggest Dr. Thompson's line of approach. He has a hatred for a certain type of mind which he describes, not unfairly, as the product of the "Punjab Tradition," "the attitude which has only just passed away, which ruled for over half a century, and is indelibly portrayed by Kipling." He shows how, on each side, there is what economists like to describe as a "lag," old Imperialist memories and ideas on one side, racial distrust and hatred on the other.

An important section of the book deals with some "immediate needs." The first and most important is to "convince Indians that Dominion status is not going to be held up a moment longer than is inevitable." There is no doubt that Dr. Thompson is right in emphasizing the importance of status. For an Englishman to underrate or deride the Indian's anxiety on this point merely argues a lack of perception. The question of status is quite separate from the exact form of government which India may possess in a few years' time, and once it can be solved there will be a chance to use the interim period to make up some of the arrears of social and economic work due to the long political struggle. Dr. Thompson suggests one act of retribution which the British should perform while they still have the power, namely, to "withdraw legal and administrative recognition from the superstition of pollution so that a clear path be made for the Depressed Classes." There are two final suggestions which are important because they would help to enlist the support of the civilized world in our relations with India. "If the Conference is flung wide to the world's gaze, there will be a minimum amount of time and effort wasted on unessentials, and Hindus and Moslems will have to come to grips with the communal question. . . . We may even shame Indians into beginning to become Indians first and Moslems or Hindus secondly. Lastly, I agree with Sir Francis Younghusband that our Government should openly and plainly state that there is no intention to keep India in the Empire against the will of her people."

Mr. Venkataramani is known to a small but discriminating public as the author of some attractive sketches of Indian village life, but his incursion into politics is not very happy. His solutions are so simple. "The next problem is the huge military expenditure. For a peaceful nation like India, which has always received with every mark of hospitality every invader, this huge army is an inversion of its harmonious life of love for all. The army should be quickly cut to nothing." *O sancta simplicitas!*

G. T. GARRATT.

THE SONS OF HELEN

Who Were the Greeks? By JOHN LINTON MYRES. (University of California Press; London: Cambridge University Press, 30s.)

IN this exciting investigation into the origins of the Greeks Professor Myres takes for his text the statement of Herodotus that when Xerxes' envoy tried to persuade the Athenians to desert the cause of Greek national freedom they justified their refusal on the ground of "Greekness, which is of one blood, and one language, and sanctuaries of gods in common and sacrifices, and behaviour of similar fashion; and this it would not be proper for Athenians to betray." It is this claim to a fourfold community—of descent, of language, of religious belief and ritual, and of thought and behaviour in everyday life—that he submits to every possible test that modern scholarship provides; and it may be questioned if more can be done to solve the Greek miracle, as Renan called it, until by some fortunate decipherment of non-Hellenic scripts, Ægean or Anatolian, we discover the full spiritual content of the civilizations the Greek-speaking intruders absorbed or supplanted. The question, "Who were the Greeks?" of course, is of primary importance, but the ultimate question is not so much who they were, but why they were as they were?

Take them as Professor Myres shows them to us, a mixed people, mainly of the Mediterranean long-headed type, but with a strong infusion of Armenoid-Alpine round-heads, and a slighter infusion of blonde long-headed (and, no doubt, round-headed) giants which fades out, as the physical type conforms more and more to the geographical and climatic conditions. It does not, of course, follow that the blonde Greek-speaking intruders were at the time of their infiltration numerically weak, for, as Professor Parsons has pointed out, the Nordic type is always intolerant of uncongenial conditions, economic or geographical, and the Sons of Helen may have vanished from the Ægean as the Goths vanished from Southern Europe. On the other hand, even when an intruder, the Alpine stock, though it may suffer, endures; and when once it becomes native, as in the highlands of Palestine, can survive wave after wave of long-head invasion. Nevertheless, Professor Myres' contention that the Hellenic invasion of Greece, owing to the configuration of the country, was probably the slow passage of small bodies of intruders has its force.

With regard to the Greek language, Professor Myres stresses somewhat unduly its regional dialectal variations at the expense of its fundamental structural unity, and he does not succeed in convincing us that the claim of the Athenians at the time of the Persian wars that the Greeks were of one language was without a certain intrinsic validity. It is as well, perhaps, that this question of Greek origins should be approached with what may be called an anti-Aryan bias; but despite the fact that Greek contains more words derived from alien sources than does any other language of the Indo-European group, it is still an unquestioned member of that group; even though it had the good (or ill) fortune to assume its literary form in an area steeped in the ancient cultures of Crete and Anatolia.

In his interpretation of the earlier archaeological evidence, which in its abundance and incidence demonstrates the amazing conflict and mingling of cultures of which from the Neolithic Age onwards the Greek mainland was the scene, Professor Myres laboriously disentangles from the obviously non-Hellenic elements those which have apparently a bearing on the arrival of the "Aryan" intruders. It is in Orchomenus in Bœotia that he finds the clearest indications of "Aryan" influence both in the early "smear ware" culture, with its oval houses suggestive of the wigwam type of dwelling used by nomads of the plains and presumably by the Ochre-grave people, and its interior ash-pit, only suitable for tenants who were presently to move on; and in the latter "gray-ware" (generally called "Minyan") culture, with its Megaron type of house, with hearth and roof-pitch suitable for a cold and wet climate, the home, in fact, in which the Greeks housed their fair-haired, grey-eyed gods, when they themselves, become Mediterraneans, lived in houses more suited to a dry and warm land. Neither

here nor elsewhere is the archaeological evidence conclusive, yet the general indication is that when the Mycenaean culture was introduced from Crete there were already Greek-speaking peoples firmly established on the mainland.

Professor Myres is at his best when he discusses the historicity of Greek folk-lore, and his tracing of the Homeric and other pedigrees of the heroic ruling families to a period approximately 1400 B.C. is a most valuable contribution to the general discussion; for his conclusions square with the Hittite records of a powerful Empire, with outposts in Asia Minor, in which a Greek element is clearly indicated. He enables us, also, to see, dimly perhaps, but none the less certainly, the Hellenic invasion of Greece as part of the great Aryan dispersal, which from 2000 B.C. began profoundly to affect the Babylonian Empire and its tributaries.

BRIDGES, FLINT IMPLEMENTS, AND CATHEDRALS

The Ancient Bridges of the South of England. By E. JERVOISE. A.M.Inst.C.E. (Architectural Press. 5s. 6d.)

The County Archaeologies: Middlesex and London. By C. E. VULLIAMY. (Methuen. 10s. 6d.)

The Cathedrals of Great Britain. By P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A. Revised and enlarged. (Dent. 7s. 6d.)

A SURVEY of the old bridges of southern England must have been a most agreeable task to undertake, and Mr. Jervoise, working on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, has carried it through with great success. He has obviously taken a delight in the job, and though the book is practically an annotated catalogue—taking the bridges as they occur on rivers and streams from source to mouth—he has succeeded in making it readable. Historical notes are included, where they were available, for instance: "It is recorded that in 1387 Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, a supporter of the King, tried to join the royal army, which was on the south side of the Thames, but found that Radcot Bridge had been broken by the Earl of Derby. He then abandoned his men and fled along the north bank of the river, hoping to cross at New Bridge. This he was unable to do, as this bridge also was held by the Earl of Derby's archers; but finally he succeeded in riding through the river at Bablock Hythe." Radcot Bridge and New Bridge still stand to-day, and make fine photographs with which to begin the list of illustrations. The seventy-eight photographs in the book are remarkably good. Some have been taken on sunny days with clear reflections, and some on stormy ones with choppy water, and all induce a desire to smell the page, in the assurance that it must exude the scent of moss, lichen, and rushes.

Mr. Vulliamy's survey covers the region contained within the old boundaries of Middlesex, and extends from the Palaeolithic period to the Norman Conquest. It is one of the increasingly large class of antiquarian books which are neither very dry-as-dust nor very popular, but are none the less useful because they bring together a lot of information which is scattered through the Proceedings of Archaeological Societies and such publications, and unifies it. The author shows a good sense of proportion, and his illustrations are well chosen.

The Rev. P. H. Ditchfield's well-known guide to British Cathedrals has been revised and brought up to date. It is authoritative, and is good value for money with its 513 pages. The print is rather small, but the worst trouble is the illustrations. Where they are reproduced from photographs they are rather misty, and where they are from drawings by Herbert Railton and others they are invariably scratchy. "Lichfield Cathedral, distant view of exterior," for instance, is nothing but a smudge with a squiggly line round it, and such pictures would be much better left out of a good guide-book, particularly as they can usually be bought on penny postcards in the respective towns, along with the souvenir china. Here a good lesson might have been learnt from Mr. Jervoise's bridges.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SACRIFICE

The Meaning of Sacrifice. By J. MONEY KYRLE, M.A., Ph.D. (Hogarth Press, and Institute of Psycho-analysis. 18s.)

Individual Psychology. By ERWIN WEXBERG, M.D. Translated by W. BERAN WOLFE, M.D. (Allen & Unwin. 15s.)

"Tylor always takes his own feelings as a guide. When, therefore, he comes across a strange custom he asks himself, What should I have to believe in order to do that? And in this way he reconstructs many of the false beliefs of primitive peoples. But he cannot imagine desires very different from those he consciously possesses. And for this reason he is prevented from discovering the most fundamental motives in primitive customs. Later anthropologists, finding that the thought of primitive people is not as theirs, have not hesitated to impute to them any motive, however strange, that seemed to account for their rites. But to do this is to discard psychology as useless in folk-lore. The best method would seem to be that of Tylor supplemented by the greater knowledge of ourselves that psycho-analysis can give."

SUCH is the method of study employed in this interpretation of the symbolism of primitive sacrificial rites. To those with some acquaintance with Freudian practice, not limited to reading, this virtual anthology of anthropological data about the Oedipus complex and the derivation of sacrificial impulses will be of considerable interest. But how far is the symbolism of the so-called "eternal triangle" that underlies the Oedipus situation, however true of the modern child *vis-à-vis* his parents in the monogamous family unit, applicable to the primitive world? It is true that the taboos on parricide, incest, and cannibalism are clearly discoverable from study of the totem régime, but some doubt seems to linger whether the matriarchate can be interpreted in such terms, though readers of Mr. James Joyce's "Ulysses" may find the metamorphosis of Bella Cohen rather significant in this connection.

Dr. Money Kyrle writes: "Rank, for whom the shock of birth is the origin and unconscious meaning of every fear, would see in a death that symbolized the return to the womb an adequate motive for the dread that seems always to have been associated with the Great Mother. But those who attach a greater importance to the Oedipus complex will suspect that some father Imago is the main cause of this fear." According to this interpretation the goddess who personified the sex leadership of women under a matriarchate took on some of the potentially sadistic qualities of the Father, and there can be no doubt of the close interaction of parents' attributes in the minds of children. There are so many references here to the symbolism of the communion service, of the tradition in mythology of the son sacrificing himself for the father, and again of the son being sacrificed by the mother, that it would have been interesting to see some relation traced between the significance of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the triangle on the human aspect of the Incarnation, Jesus, his mother Mary, and the man Joseph whom she marries.

Parricide and homosexuality are evidently regarded by this historian as originally the alternative extremes of escape:—

"But neither the pure masculine nor the pure feminine solutions of the male Oedipus complex are now normal. More often a compromise is formed, and the son exhibits characteristics of both. . . . His ego thus derives from his mother those feminine sublimations which give him a certain docility to authority, and from his father a certain combination of manliness and morality which leave him heterosexual but "exogamous." Thus even if the extreme solutions are avoided, the Oedipus complex leaves a curtailed potency, a certain amenity to the discipline of superiors and a morality derived from the introjection of a father's prohibitions. Without these qualities no society could have arisen. They have given stability at the expense of progress. But some day it may be possible to maintain a culture at a lesser cost."

Before the emergence of Freudian psycho-analysis there was such a tendency to explain mental symptoms in terms of physical causation that it is interesting to find in Dr. Erwin Wexberg's text-book on Individual Psychology an interpretation of Adler's theory of organ inferiority as showing how differently in various types of character the purposive personality compensates for hereditary predispositions in their response to social obligations.

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As Adler wrote elsewhere: “Almost all people live in fear of the opinion of others and permit their actions to be influenced by it. When we become aware of the unnecessarily great extent to which superfluous anxiety and worry govern the conduct of our fellow beings and of how little true courage there is in the world, we cannot wonder that our epoch is called the ‘neurotic age.’ It was probably not much different in other times; perhaps the only distinction is to be found in the changing fashions of living.”

BERNARD CAUSTON.

EMILY DICKINSON

The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson. By GENEVIEVE TAGGARD. (Knopf. 15s.)

EMILY DICKINSON's life, with its single facet of circumstance, may seem easily to shape itself to one definition, and Emily herself, with her one mystery, to require not representing but merely explaining. She, indeed, supplies her own formula to the mystery: “Very well, father, if you do not trust me out of your sight, I will never leave your garden again.” Legend discovers Emily in the garden with her unknown lover, surprised by her father holding a lantern above their heads. The biographer endeavours to see by the light of that same lantern and to discern the features of the lover. Hitherto it has been supposed that Emily Dickinson became a recluse because her lover was already married. Lieutenant Hunt, who interested her, Emily once wrote, “more than any man she ever met,” has been selected by the biographers to be the lover, and around him the whole of Emily's life has been constructed. Genevieve Taggard, however, will have none of Lieutenant Hunt, nor does she waste many pages on idle controversy. She realizes to her credit that a person's life is not unlocked by a single key even though that person lived most of her life in a single house. She has too much respect for Emily to be merely explanatory. She knows too well that the “life and mind” of Emily Dickinson are the poems simply, and her aim is to give a critical introduction to the poetry and to Emily herself a background of mid-Victorian New England.

Emily's life had two crises—the early death of Leonard Humphrey, her tutor, and the renunciation of George Gould, her lover.

“My life closed twice before its close;
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me.

“So huge, so hopeless to conceive,
As these that twice befell.
Parting is all we know of heaven
And all we need of hell.”

If we add the abiding influence of her jealous father, there are then three occasions for “romantic mischief in the telling of Emily's life.” Miss Taggard avoids the mischief, but at the same time lays most of the responsibility on Emily's father, of whom she gives us an excellent impression. For believing that George Gould was Emily's lover, she has not only proof circumstantial but proof evidential. An anonymous correspondent who was the friend of Lavinia, Emily's sister, has confessed the secret, and allows her statement, duly attested, to be printed. Certainly George Gould fits the facts better than Edward Hunt. Emily's father, for whom she had a strange mixture of regard, could not bear his daughter to marry, least of all, a poor cleric, and

at his will Emily renounced Gould, vowed never to leave her father's garden, and kept her vow. Gould, however, had not the same steadfastness. Some five years later he married, entered the Church, and died, on his own confession, a disappointed man.

JAMES THORNTON.

THE HARNESSING OF EUROPE

Sardinia: The Island of the Nuraghi. By DOUGLAS GOLDRING. (Harrap. 15s.)

Across Iceland: The Land of Frost and Fire. By OLIVE MURRAY CHAPMAN. (Lane. 15s.)

They Climbed the Alps. By EDWIN MULLER, Jr. (Cape. 10s. 6d.)

France in Tunis and Algeria. By W. BASIL WORSFOLD. (Brentano. 5s.)

IN and about Europe a relentless taming and saming process goes on. Everywhere this abominably useful and ignominious reduction of native individuality to international comfort! Perhaps it is part of the general running-down of the universe that travel becomes easier and duller. The label reads “Progress” on one side and “Degeneration” on the other. You can stick it up whichever way round you feel inclined. Most travel-writers shuffle it unfairly and go back on their own convictions. Of the present four, the first and second aim, in their choice of territory, to be one up on the process of domestication; the two others record its course and its result. The taming of the Alps is, of course, not quite literal. They look as wild as ever—except for those cheating little railways that turn the tourists out on some of them. But Mr. Muller, in his popular short history of climbing, shows the peaks going through three stages: inaccessible—the most difficult ascent in the Alps—an easy day for a lady. Women climbers may protest here. They are not ladies; not in that fainting-on-the-sofa sense. The phrase, however, was fashioned in the nineties. It comes from Mummery, of Grepon fame. Mr. Muller's book, it should be said, is not for Alpinists. It attempts to explain *why they do it*. Most mountaineers jib at this.

The Alps belong, anyway, to a limited company. But consider the Mediterranean countries' fate. Here are the old Arab towns of Tunis and Algeria embedded in great modern, roomy, and enlightened structures by the French. Mr. Worsfold is a stern and convinced traveller, whose label reads “Progress” all the time. His main concern is with administration, and one can go to him for a cheerful and optimistic estimate of the colonial efficiency of France. And now there is to be Fascist efficiency in Sardinia; but the traveller who goes exclusively to observe it is not yet. He is still escaping from the overharnessed countries; and in this matter one notes evolution in a bare ten years. D. H. Lawrence shook off the dust of Sicily thankfully, for Sardinia. Sicily was too sophisticated. But Mr. Goldring dashes hurriedly through once-wild Corsica, escaping from tourists and conducted trips. Corsica, in these few years, has lost her glory; i.e., you can get civilized accommodation there.

So it is Sardinia's turn. Sardinia, asworn with *carabinieri*, has but a year or two, and then the passionately elemental traveller, like the Alpinist in search of virgin peaks, must just quit Europe. Meanwhile, Mr. Goldring puts one in doubt as to what kind of traveller he is. Are his sympathies political, sentimental, or æsthetic? Which side up does he intend to nail his label? Is it really national costumes or improved sanitation that he hopes to find? The conclusion is that he is honest enough to travel and to write without an attitude. His honesty works two ways. First, he is not going to dispense with modern aids to comfort in order to be “in the picture.” Secondly, he gives the picture as he chanced to find it, without any of those full-dress literary descriptions that instal the author as main figure with a landscape peeping out behind his legs.

With regard to the first question, it does, perhaps, seem a pity to go racing through Sardinia in a private car. One misses something, even while gaining a good deal, from both informative and descriptive standpoints. Local conveyances contain so much that is characteristic, whether as a study of organization or of human types. Lawrence almost over-

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Broadway House, Carter Lane, London, E.C.

did this factor; he was always writing from the bus or train. But the result was vivid. Mr. Goldring, covering (as he twice points out) in twenty minutes distances that would take an ox-cart the whole day, was able to see far more of Sardinia, to report on scattered villages and churches that would never otherwise have been reached. One cannot have it both ways. Either that sense of contact with the country, and a single limited route from south to north, or a far greater store of information, but a loss of intimacy.

Mr. Goldring's honesty on the second question is appealing. He visited Sardinia in the winter. And Sardinia in the winter, with its broad plains unprotected from the cold north winds, is bleak as Scotland. This fact, with its accompaniments of snow and hail, dark skies and unwarmed inns, is faithfully recorded. One could imagine no more valiant effort to present the island at its worst. An Italian, reading it, might be exasperated. But in England we have a shrewd distrust of meteorologic enthusiasts, and discount their lyricism to save future disappointments. There is nothing to discount in Mr. Goldring. He is no lyricist, and has not made Sardinia in the least attractive to the mere comfort-loving tourist. But his book is a successful blend of personal experience and unobtrusive information, which should give the intending (and undaunted) visitor a fair idea of what he may reasonably expect to find.

Invert Mr. Goldring, and you get Mrs. Murray Chapman. Summer in Iceland, landscapes at their loveliest, and the author travelling, as the Icelanders, on ponies. She is more enterprising than Mr. Goldring, and she writes less well; though the book is brightened with her photographs and sketches, and her intense enthusiasm for all she saw. Iceland will be popularized before Sardinia, if these two accounts have any say in it.

SYLVA NORMAN.

HISTORY OF PACIFISM

The Anglo-American Peace Movement in the Mid-Nineteenth Century. By CHRISTINA PHELPS, Ph.D. (New York: Columbia University Press; London: King. 14s.)

COMMISSIONED by Columbia University, Dr. Phelps visited England last year, and combining the results of a careful study of the records of the old Peace Movement here with similar investigations in her own country, she gives a very interesting and valuable account of this pioneer attempt to bring order out of the international anarchy under which unhappily we still exist.

The interest and value of the book for readers of the present day alike arise from the comparisons suggested between the aims and methods of pacifists eighty to a hundred years ago with those of our own time. Dr. Phelps is probably right in claiming that, though the outbreak of the Crimean War in Europe and the Civil War in America destroyed the plans of older pacifists for a Congress of Nations and a Permanent Court of Appeal in International Disputes, reviving Pacifism after the World War owed much to their preparatory work. The League of Nations and the Permanent Court of International Justice are only realizations in fact of the dreams of 1840. In an appendix, Dr. Phelps gives in parallel columns the proposals contained in a volume of prize essays issued by the America Peace Society that year, and the powers entrusted to the League and its court.

The series of wars which followed the Crimea, though it weakened, did not destroy the Victorian Peace Movement; rather it diverted the movement into other channels. Till 1919, projects for a permanent International authority gave way to a demand for disinterested arbitration, the successful settlement by this means of the Alabama claims turning men's hopes in that direction. But Dr. Phelps's chapters on the old plans for a Congress of Nations, for the Codification of International Law, for Arbitration and Disarmament, show how clearly Victorian pacifists understood the needs of the world, however much nearer we may be to realizing some of them in fact.

F. J. S.

LE CONFORT MODERNE

Modern French Decoration. By K. M. KAHLE. (Putnam. 15s.)

THE French traditions of furniture and interior design have suffered from a little over two centuries of tastelessness. A visit to the *Salon des Arts Ménagers* in Paris is still infinitely more depressing than a day at Olympia among the Ideal Homes. But the illustrations in Miss Kahle's book show that the decorator is emerging, slowly, and in a few directions; most obviously in the designing of furnishing textiles and wall-papers. Purely geometrical forms and African patterns have shown the way to some delicious rugs, and the fabrics of Rodier are complementary to the work of the more two-dimensional modern painters. A painter's influence is particularly clear in two rooms furnished round pictures by Marie Laurencin. One, designed by Guillemard, is excellent; the other is cornery.

In metalwork, meanwhile, the French are decidedly advancing: we are shown a wrought-iron doorway by Edgar Brandt with a most exhilarating design of a leaping deer. Long metal windows, too, and neat systems of concealed lighting have been borrowed from the architectural innovators. But furniture, glass, and porcelain are less successfully handled, though Miss Kahle may be doing an injustice to the cabinet-makers in her selection of heavy monolithic designs; certainly ceramics are badly done by in photographs which exclude Adnet and the best work of Lalique in favour of the sugary porcelain of Hélène Gatelet.

Among the furniture designers, only Djo-Bourgeois exhibits pieces of any formal merit. He chooses light woods rather after the manner of Ambrose Heal, and plain square edges which make his furniture somewhat forbidding. His dining-room suite seems to hint that the refectory can be used for a mortuary also, but his chairs are extremely attractive beside the repulsive fibre and metal now in fashion in France.

H. D. ZIMAN.

A LITERARY POCKET-BOOK

Among new pamphlets, literary and other, mention may be made of "Chatterton's Apology," by F. C. Owlett (of the author, 14, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., 2s. 6d.). Mr. Owlett imagines Chatterton, Burgum the pewterer, and Horace Walpole meeting in an unfrequented spot without the Circuit of Elysium. Mr. Owlett is not so very unjust to the wit, who, he sees, might have been kinder to Chatterton had Chatterton been frank about Rowley. The pamphlet includes also an appreciation of Blake, and a note on the alleged effeminacy of Cowper's poetry. From Messrs. Stephen & Pollok of Ayr comes a booklet by James Archibald Morris (2s. 6d.) pleading for increased protection—from fire—of the Burns Cottage and Museum at Alloway. "Daniel O'Connell and Ellen Courtenay," by Denis Gwynn (Blackwell, 3d.), reviews an old scandal which, recently revived, is stoutly denounced by Mr. Gwynn, and with some show of justice; for in the matter of Ellen Courtenay O'Connell acted unlike himself, unless the charge she brought was just subsidized blackmail. In "The Essentials of Calendar Reform" (Routledge, 1s. 6d.), Mr. Alexander Philip marshals the facts of the case for a fixed Easter, and for other changes in the Calendar. Mr. Philip holds that the essential of reform is the equalization of the half-years, with a *dies non* on May 31st or December 31st.

Dr. S. H. Mellone has condensed into three papers, each hardly exceeding the limits of an essay, and published together as "The Dawn of Modern Thought" (Milford, 4s. 6d.), the essentials of the thought of the three great seventeenth-century thinkers, Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz. This is therefore, as Dr. Ross points out in his introductory notes, a book that "should appeal to many readers who find the effect of general histories of philosophy confusing and benumbing." Dr. Mellone has graces of manner which, combined with a singular charity of thought, make him an ideal interpreter of philosophy to the layman and the student; he neither confuses nor benumbs.

Perhaps the most bewildering innovation of the World War was the German gun that at a "psychological moment" in 1918 bombarded Paris from eighty miles' distance—about three times the range of any of the earlier types; and, if anything concerned with such terrible inventions can be

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called romantic, the history of this one is so. It is told at last by Lieutenant-Colonel H. W. Miller, the American artillery expert, in "The Paris Gun" (Harrap, 10s. 6d.). And it is told with remarkable talent and breadth of view, in spite of the difficulty of obtaining information always guarded with special austerity; we may see a great deal of the "long black arm" extending from its extraordinary emplacement to strike a great city—and to what degree it succeeded, and in what conditions its work ended. The book is full of plans and photographs; the pictures of the gun itself are not quite satisfying.

Another prodigious feat of the War—one rivalling German colossalism—was that of Lord Kitchener, and of that too a notable history appears now: "The Kitchener Armies," by V. W. Germain (Davies, 7s. 6d.). For this, the materials to be sifted were very copious. The author has selected and united them clearly, telling the story from start ("The Old Army") to finish ("The Passing of the Kitchener Armies"), from the days of semi-civilian uniforms on parade to those of perpetual steel helmets and box respirators. There is room in the book for many anecdotes, and for a candid estimate of Sir Douglas Haig. The end of the history is pathetic; the battle of the Somme in 1916 was almost the grave of Kitchener's armies, and Kitchener had foreseen something of the sort ("Let me never hear from anyone in France any mention even of the words 'piercing the line.'").

BRIDGE

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A DOUBLE THAT WENT ASTRAY

"I CAME to grief yesterday," said Miranda, "on rather an interesting hand."

"Bad luck," I said. "Tell me all about it."

"Well," explained Miranda, "it was like this. I was playing with Ferdinand against Trinculo and Mrs. Gonzalo. I dealt, and this is what I held—"

"One moment," I interrupted, "what was the score, please?"

"It was the first deal of the rubber. This was my hand:—"

♠ A K Q x
♥ 10 x
♦ A K 10 x x x
♣ x

Now what would you have called on that?"

"One Spade," I replied.

"I thought you'd say that. Unfortunately it didn't occur to me until it was too late. I realized, before the bidding was over, that one ought to show a Spade first, in case it's too late to call so short a suit by the time the bidding comes round to one again."

"Exactly," I replied. "You could call any number of Diamonds at a later stage. I suppose you began with a Diamond?"

"Yes," said Miranda.

"If you're opening with Diamonds at all, you should begin with about Four. Well, what happened next?"

"Trinculo, on my left, called Three Hearts. Then Ferdinand called Four Clubs, and Mrs. Gonzalo, Four Hearts. What should I have called then?"

"Five Diamonds."

"How annoying you are," said Miranda. "I believe you've seen the cards. I should have thought, with my hand, *anyone* would have doubled. I've got three probable tricks in Spades, two probable tricks in Diamonds, and Ferdi's Clubs in the background. Do you mean to tell me that it didn't look a sitter on all that?"

"It's very tempting, I admit. But you ought to have argued it out this way. The hand is clearly a freak. Both your adversaries are calling Hearts; it's therefore quite likely that one of them is void of Diamonds and the other void of Clubs. Again, Ferdinand's Four Clubs was a forced call, which may indicate length without tops. Thus you've only your Spades to rely on in doubling, and you can't count four to the Ace, King, Queen, as worth more than two certain tricks. Your double, therefore, is a very shaky one. On the other hand, you'll be very unlucky if you don't make game in Diamonds, whatever Ferdinand has in his hand. It may be that he has top Clubs; it may be that he's short of Hearts; it's almost certainly one or the other. Five Diamonds is the right call every time."

"That's what the others thought too," said Miranda. "However, I doubled; and, would you believe it—I suppose you would, in view of your analysis—Trinculo made his contract."

"Can you remember the hands?"

"I can't remember them, but we made a note of them—as we knew that you'd be interested. Here they are:—"

♠ x x
♥ None
♦ Q J x
♣ K J 10 x x x x x
(Ferdinand)

♥ x
♦ A K J x x x x x
♥ x
♣ Q x x

(Trinculo)

North
West East
South

(Mrs. Gonzalo)

♠ J 10 x x x x
♥ Q x x
♦ x x x
♣ A

(Miranda)

♠ A K Q x
♥ 10 x
♦ A K 10 x x x
♣ x

"I notice," I remarked, after studying them, "that you could easily have made your Five Diamonds, and that you might, with a certain amount of luck, have made Six."

"I know," answered Miranda, "you needn't rub it in. I still think—while admitting the force of your arguments—that Trinculo was lucky to make his double. It required a certain amount of ingenuity on his part."

"Not very much. A Spade, a Diamond, and a Club are surely all he need lose. You over-ruffed one of his Clubs, I suppose; but he still had a third trump in Dummy for his last one."

"Yes," agreed Miranda, sadly, "that is exactly what happened. Anyway, it was one of the most disappointing hands I've played, and it's no satisfaction to me to hear how much better you'd have played it."

N.B.—The bidding recommended above is Auction bidding. At Contract, Miranda's proper opening bid is Two Diamonds.

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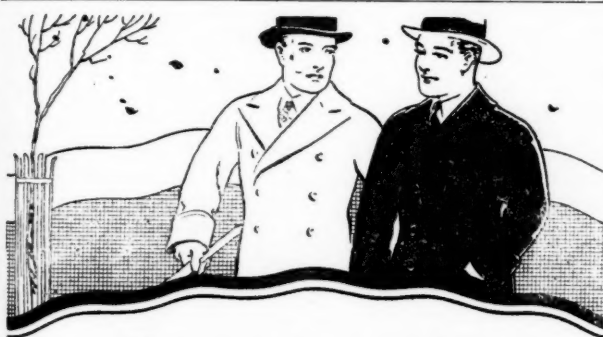
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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

GERMAN LOANS—UNITED MOLASSES—PETROL AND SHELL—ARGENTINE RAILS—PENPOLL

TO adopt the style of the Meteorological Office, a deep depression over German loans early this week caused unsettled conditions to spread throughout the gilt-edged and foreign bond markets, while another and more intense depression centred over United Molasses spread generally over industrial shares. Later the barometer in the gilt-edged and foreign bond areas rose considerably, and the danger of storms would seem to have passed. The outlook is still somewhat unsettled, but I cannot find that the City is seriously disturbed about the prospect of a German revolution, which so intrigues Lord Rothermere. It is, of course, recognized that a serious withdrawal of foreign short-term balances from Berlin and a further depreciation in the German exchange might precipitate a monetary crisis which would bring about drastic credit restriction and intensify the industrial depression. Such economic and financial problems are a cause of real concern to the holder of German loans, but political anxiety at the moment of writing seems to have been allayed. The following table shows the reaction and recovery in German loans:—

	Sept. 12th.	Sept. 22nd.	Sept. 24th.	Present Yield %
German 5½% (new) ...	85½	77	80	6.87
German 7% ...	106½	101½	103½	6.76
Berlin City 6% ...	90½	79	81½	7.36
Saxony 6% ...	91½	82½	85	7.06
German Potash 6½% ...	101½	99	99	6.56

I would add that there was never any wholesale liquidation in German loans this week. Indeed, the market has been so narrow that liquidation on a large scale has never been attempted.

As regards United Molasses, the storm broke out over the passing of the interim dividend and the "bearish" report of the directors. "In June and July"—to quote the directors—"the demand for molasses began to drop off and the freight market began to weaken. . . . The Company has been notified by some of its customers abroad that they may not be able to carry out their commitments. In consequence quantities of molasses . . . are accumulating in our tanks. Unfortunately this coincides with a serious depression in the tanker freight market, and for the first time in our history we are experiencing difficulty in finding employment for all our vessels." These phrases read like an alarmist article in a Sunday newspaper. Anxiety was hardly allayed by the directors' statement that the financial position of the Company was of great strength, and that an arrangement had been concluded with the Distillers Company for an exchange of shares at the rate of two United Molasses shares for one Distillers. But are the directors really more "bearish" than the situation demands? The Company has serious troubles in the United States. American distillers of alcohol, who had bought molasses forward last year at very high prices in anticipation of the industrial boom continuing, are apparently repudiating their contracts. Moreover, the sharp fall in the price of molasses implies that the Company will have to take a heavy inventory loss on its stocks of molasses at the end of the year. At the moment of writing United Molasses £1 shares are quoted at 25s. 6d., having been as low as 24s., and as high as £6 early this year before the 50 per cent. bonus was declared.

We British cannot be proud of our attempts to control or stabilize the prices of rubber and tin, but if we are tempted to become despondent, we may derive some morbid satisfaction in contemplating the complete mess which the Americans have made of their copper and oil export associations. Last year the American Copper Exporters Inc. had copper firmly fixed at 18 cents per lb. In the face of rising stocks they held on to 18 cents too long. The price is now 10½ cents, and it is patent that the Copper Exporters Inc. have lost control of the market. The American Oil Exporters' Association, formed at the beginning of 1929, fixed the export price of the U.S. "Motor" grade of petrol at

8½ cents per U.S. gallon. They, too, held on too long. In February this year they reduced it to 8 cents, but thereafter continued to ignore the downward trend of domestic petrol prices. Confronted with abnormally high stocks of petrol, members of the Association became restive, and to prevent a complete break-up the Association has agreed to commit suicide for three months, allowing each member to make his own export prices in the hope that in three months' time another agreement will be possible. It was to prevent the dumping of cheap petrol in this country by unleashed American exporters that the big petrol combines suddenly agreed to reduce their retail prices by 2d. per gallon. This is the secret history of the British petrol cut. It will cost the Royal Dutch-Shell group and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company over £2,000,000 each in a full year. Other price reductions are being made in European markets, and if the wild men in the American oil industry seriously begin dumping "distress" petrol in Europe, more price reductions may follow. I cannot translate the economic problems of the oil industry into terms of oil dividends at this stage. The loss of revenue to the Royal Dutch and Shell Transport from the British petrol cut and the passing of the Shell Union dividend should be about £1,000,000 and £685,000 respectively this year (equivalent to dividends of 2.4 per cent. for Royal Dutch and 2.8 per cent. for Shell), but these holding Companies have the Mexican and Canadian Eagle dividends as part compensation for their revenue losses.

The dividend cuts announced by the Argentine railways proved to have been discounted fairly accurately in the markets. The following table gives the new and old dividend rates together with the present market prices and dividend yields:—

	Divs. 1928-29	Divs. 1929-30	High 1930	Present Price	Div. Yield %
Buenos Ayres Gt. Southern	8%	6%	110½	83	7.41
Buenos Ayres Western	7%	5%	100½	63	8.13
Central Argentine	7%	5%	100½	70½	7.22
Buenos Ayres Pacific	7%	7%	106½	83½	8.70
Entre Rios	7%	6%	100½	78	7.89

It is, after all, fairly easy to speculate intelligently in Argentine Railway securities. We know every week the gross traffic figures, we can watch the exchange fluctuations, we can gauge the prosperity of the country from the export trade statistics, we have the crop forecasts as a guide to the future. The reports of this season's crops are excellent, but the railway traffics, which are still declining (except Entre Rios), will not reflect bigger crop yields until early next year. If Argentina begins to show a recovery in trade by March, 1931, we may be nearing the bottom of our trade cycle, but Argentina's recovery may be retarded if grain prices remain depressed by Russian dumping and bumper crops in the United States and Canada.

A further case of "rationalization" displacing labour is to be found in the closing down of the Penpoll tin smelter at Bootle, Liverpool. This smelter was entirely rebuilt in 1928, so that there is no doubt about its technical efficiency. But Consolidated Tin Smelters was formed in December, 1929, to "rationalize" the tin smelting industry. It took over all the big smelters in this country, including Penpoll and Williams Harvey and Company of Bootle. It happens that both Penpoll and Williams Harvey operate on Bolivian ore, which has to be smelted with Nigerian ore to obtain the required purity. Now the exports, both of Bolivian and Nigerian ore, on account of restriction, are 50 per cent. and 38 per cent. less to-day than in January. Consolidated Tin Smelters has, therefore, decided that it is impossible to work two smelters economically on a short supply of ore. So Penpoll must close down. The displacement of labour is small, but more serious is the possible displacement of dividends of the London Tin Corporation, whose 10s. preference and ordinary shares are now quoted at 6s. and 10s.

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